

# Clara Ho Tung : A Hong Kong Lady, Her Family and Her Times



by  
**Irene Cheng**

何東爵士夫人張蓮覺居士傳

鄭何艾齡恭撰



Dr. Irene Cheng, B.A. Hong Kong, 1925; M.A. Columbia, 1929 and Ph.D. London, 1936 . . . appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, 1961. She was formerly a lecturer on Chinese cultural life at the University of California at San Diego.

Dr. Irene Cheng has written this book with the context of Hong Kong in mind. She includes appendices on Chinese customs, calendars and history that will explain to the reader not only the woman, Clara Ho Tung, but the milieu in which she worked and raised her prodigious family.

The book is Dr. Cheng's tribute to her mother, who wrote her own memoirs before World War II.

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Her Family and Her Times**

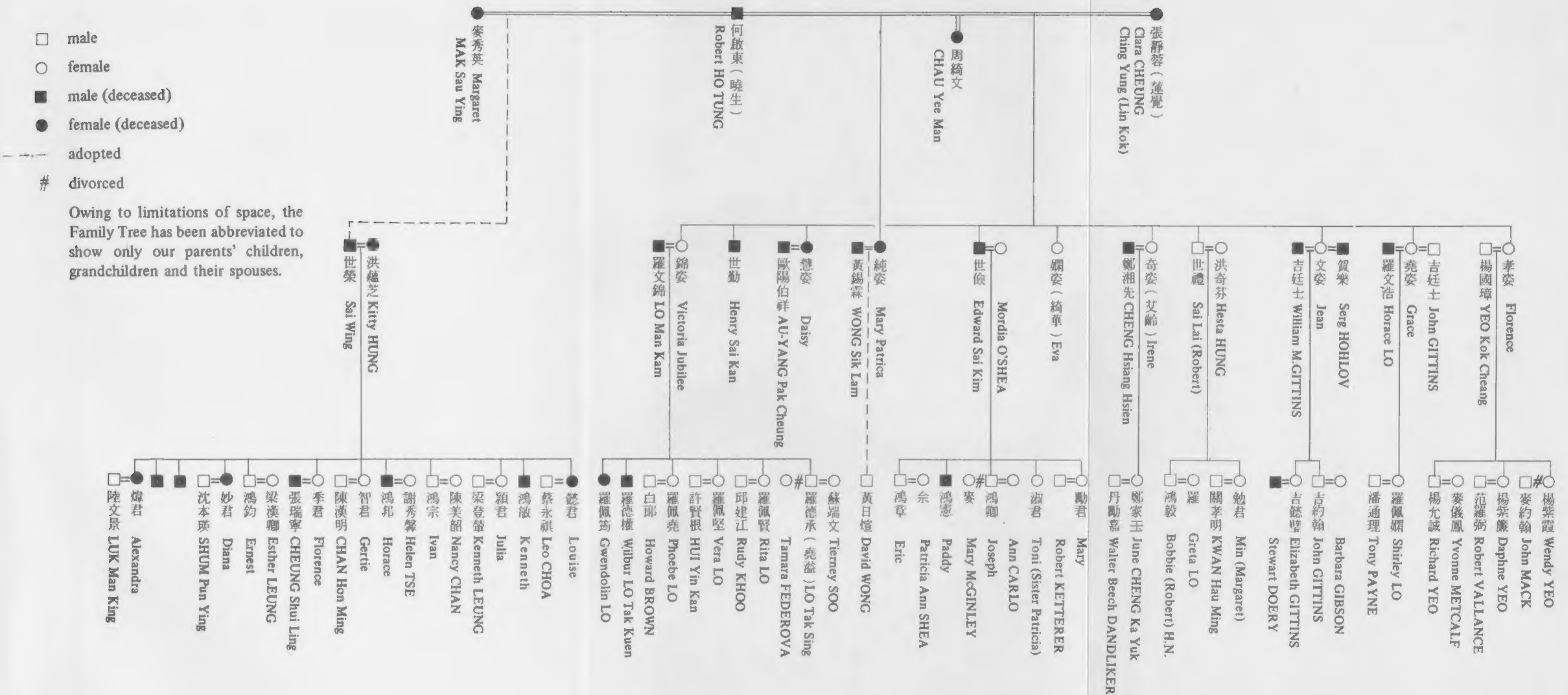
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With best wishes

鄭  
何  
艾  
苓

Irene Cheng  
Feb 1980

Family Tree of the Ho Tung Family



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The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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## FOREWORD

I have known the Ho Tung family for more than three decades. As a young Government cadet officer in the 1920s, and in my ten years as Governor of Hong Kong, from 1947 to 1957—although Lady Clara was by then no longer with us—I knew Sir Robert and many members of his family well. I still count the author of this book as a friend. It would, indeed, be impossible to live in Hong Kong without knowing such a large and distinguished family.

Evidences of their benevolence and kindness are to be seen everywhere, in hospitals, in the Ho Tung Technical School for Girls, in the Buddhist temple and school which was so near to Lady Clara's heart, in the Hall of Residence for women in the University of Hong Kong which bears the name of Lady Ho Tung Hall and was founded by her husband in memory of her cousin (referred to in this book as "Mother"), even in Hong Kong's Portuguese neighbour Macao, where the Ho Tung Chinese Library bears the name of its founder. In business, in law, in education and in the arts, they have a tradition of service to the community of Hong Kong which must surely be unsurpassed.

It is in the hope of making this family history known to readers who have perhaps never set foot in Asia that Dr. Cheng has written this account of her mother's life and activities. In doing so she has told the story of her large and brilliant family and also painted a picture of a Hong Kong family in all its intimate detail, which is in itself a chapter of Anglo-Chinese history.

Dr. Cheng herself is by no means the least distinguished of her

family, and is a living proof of her “Mamma’s” concern with education. At home in three continents, and yet most at home as a Chinese Confucianist, she has written a work not only of filial piety but of vivid interest to all who care for the story of such a full, busy and happy life as was the lot of this Chinese Lady—Clara Ho Tung of Hong Kong.

A. Grantham

London

April 1973

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When Dr. Margaret Mead and I were members of the Executive Board of the World Federation for Mental Health, from 1956 to 1959, we often spoke of the intercultural and inter-racial characteristics of Hong Kong, a prototype of the meeting of East and West. I told her that I hoped some day to write a biography of my mother, who recognised the value of both cultures, in her own life and in the education of her children.

Ten years passed. I saw Dr. Mead again. Once more she encouraged me and I am indebted to her interest and to the Institute for Intercultural Studies, which transformed my wish into reality.

Meanwhile I was fortunate to receive the encouraging help of Mr. W. Emmett Small, a lecturer in Creative Writing, whose courses I very much enjoyed, and without whose patient criticism this book might never have been written.

In the academic year of 1971-72 I joined the Writing courses of Mr. Ronal Kayser, who writes under the name of Dale Clark, in an Extension Course of the San Diego campus of the University of California. I am grateful to Mr. Kayser for his many valuable suggestions and his painstaking care with my work.

Friends have also been helpful with their suggestions, particularly Miss Barbara Sheffield. In our conversations I was often able to "think aloud" through many difficult aspects of the work.

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made an invaluable contribution throughout.

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Mr. Wong Shau-lam, Dean of the Faculty of Social Science of Chung Chi College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, patiently directed me in the preparation of the manuscript during the spring of 1973 and I am very much indebted to him for his guidance. Mr. Kwong Shun Fong, Lecturer in Biology at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, used his expert knowledge to draw a clear and beautiful Family Tree of the Ho Tung family.

Similarly I am most grateful to Mr. Victor Chain of San Diego, a former university lecturer at the South Eastern University and the Customs' College in Shanghai and an enthusiastic calligraphist, for his invaluable help in matters concerning the translation and interpretation of Chinese ideas.

My story is based mostly on memory assisted by the few books and documents I have been able to consult. I have tried to be as accurate as possible, but may have been at fault in minor details. I did not show the manuscript to all the members of my large family, but Victoria (Lady Lo), my eldest sister, read the original draft and parts of the succeeding revisions. She helpfully supplied information which I needed and corrected factual errors.

Finally, while I was revising the manuscript in Hong Kong in 1973, my nephew, Mr. David E.L. Wong, helped me with the editing.

I am also grateful to the management and staff of the South China Morning Post, the Industrial and Commercial Daily News, the City Hall Library and the Fung Ping Shan Library for assistance in my research and for permission to quote from their publications or to reproduce their photographs.

To each and all the above, and to other friends and relatives too numerous to name, a very sincere THANK YOU.

Irene Cheng, née Ho

San Diego  
California  
U. S. A.

## INTRODUCTION

Family meals often lasted a long time when we were little children, partly because my mother was a slow eater and partly because she would often talk to us about her early childhood or our family history. In this way, many stories became firmly imprinted on our memories. As we grew older, studies demanded more of our attention leaving us less time for leisurely family meals. Our mother, too, had other pressing thoughts and worries. But those many hours of intimate reminiscence have never been forgotten.

On January 5, 1938, after an illness of only a few days, my mother died. Shortly afterwards we came across an autobiography which she had requested her friend and dedicated religious assistant, Miss Lam Ling Chun, to write for her from her oral reminiscences. This document she had entitled, *Reflections of Sixty Years*. Written in a clear and easily understood Chinese style, the manuscript appealed very much to my sister Victoria and to me. We thought it would be interesting to others and urged our father to have it published. However, he procrastinated and, unfortunately, during World War II the manuscript was lost.

I promised myself that some day I would try to recapture my mother's story, or at least as much of it as I could recall from what we had been told in those early years. I was prompted to do this not only because of our personal relationship but also because she had, and still has after her death, a significant influence on thousands of people in Hong Kong.

In 1920, the record of her travels to the sacred mountains of China was begun in a book written by our first tutor, Mr. Chiu Kut-um and later revised by our second tutor, Mr. Leung T'ing-yuk. It was published in Chinese, about 1935, with the title *Travelogue on Famous Mountains*. My mother was shown as the author, under her Buddhist name, Ho Cheung Lin-kok. In one of the appendices, she set forth the bare historical facts of her life and traced the development of her religious thought. It has, of course, been a useful source.

Since my mother was born in 1875, she would have been ninety in 1964. Chinese families celebrate the birthdays of their ancestors annually even after their deaths until they would have been almost a hundred years old. It is also Chinese custom to have a more elaborate celebration every tenth year, so it was decided to have a special one for my mother in 1964. As she was the founder of the Tung Lin Kok Yuen Buddhist temple, and the Po Kok Vocational Middle School for Girls, their Board of Directors sponsored this memorial occasion. Victoria, my younger brother (General Ho Shai-lai, otherwise called "Robbie"), their spouses and I are members of that Board. I felt at the time that the birthday celebration would provide a good opportunity to supplement the information in her *Travelogue* with a more intimate and detailed study of her personality and social contributions. The rough draft on these matters which I prepared was added to by my brother and then composed in proper Chinese style by a well known scholar, Mr. Poon Siu-p'un. It was printed as a little booklet and distributed to friends and relatives.

Later, when I had begun this book, I learned that my sister, Jean Gittins, was writing her autobiography. This was published in 1969 by the *South China Morning Post* of Hong Kong under the title *Eastern Windows—Western Skies*. Inevitably, the descriptions of our childhood years overlap, but our viewpoints sometimes differed and it is evident that we were often interested in different things.

My mother was a significant historical figure, at least in the circumscribed locale of Hong Kong. She exemplified the non-exclusive nature of the Chinese religious outlook by being simultaneously a good Confucianist and a good Buddhist, and she made distinctive contributions to the community in which she lived. The story of her life may therefore be of some consequence to those who are interested in what has happened in her part of the Orient during the past century.

Widely as she travelled, Hong Kong was my mother's primary environment; indeed it was for most of the Ho Tung family until the

late 1930's. A very brief summary of Hong Kong's development might be helpful to some readers. For those interested, more detailed studies can be found in many books. A few are listed in the bibliography.

### **A brief history of Hong Kong**

For centuries the Chinese isolated themselves almost completely, not even allowing foreign merchants and traders to reside in China. The British, by the early nineteenth century, had obtained permission to do business on the outskirts of the southern port of Canton for part of each year. Most of the British and other foreign communities had to live forty miles away in Macao, which had been a Portuguese settlement since the mid-sixteenth century.

One of the principal commodities which the British, and other traders, brought to China was opium, grown in Bengal under the auspices of the East India Company. The opium trade drained silver from China and demoralized its people. The number of addicts grew rapidly. The opium traffic was of concern to many Chinese officials. Edicts prohibiting its import were issued in 1796 and in 1800, but they had no effect.

In 1839 an Imperial Commissioner, Lin Tse-hsu, was sent to Canton to deal with the situation. He ordered that all opium in the possession of foreign merchants be confiscated on the ground that such was contraband. Thus 20,291 chests were collected and destroyed. This action, and other points of disagreement between the British and Chinese, led to several wars, the first from 1839-1842 (called the "opium war"), all of which the British won.

One consequence of China's many defeats was the Crown Colony of Hong Kong. In 1842, China ceded to Britain the Island of Hong Kong and, in 1860, Kowloon Peninsula as far as the part now called Boundary Street, as well as Stonecutters Island, in Hong Kong Harbour. Finally, in 1898, Britain was given a ninety-nine year lease on the rest of the mainland north of Kowloon to the Shum Chun River, together with over 230 islands, mostly small, uninhabitable bits of rock. This leased area came to be known as the New Territories. When one realizes that the airport and major reservoirs, for instance, are in this leased territory its importance becomes obvious.

Before it became a British Colony in the early 1840's, Hong Kong was a group of scattered villages, supported by some subsistence farm-

ing on the scanty cultivable land, and by fishing. Hong Kong had once seemed so utterly worthless that Lord Palmerston, the British Foreign Secretary, contemptuously described it as "a barren island with hardly a house upon it."

Hong Kong's principal, many would say its only, geographic advantage is its magnificent harbour. This is why the British wanted it and why, until recently, its main income has been from entrepôt trade. Along the northern shore of the Island there was a narrow strip of level land on which was built the city of Victoria in which most of the important banks and business firms were eventually established. This strip was very narrow; but the foreshore was relatively shallow and easily filled in so that the city was gradually extended outward into the harbour. Additional building sites were thus created, both by leveling hills to obtain the fill earth and by extending the land into the harbour.

South of the harbour, the Island's terrain gradually rose higher and higher. First there was a hilly section devoted mainly to small Chinese shops and poorer residences, then, higher up, better Chinese residential districts. Slowly the city pushed farther and farther up the hillsides. In 1888 the Peak Tram was built, linking the city or harbour area with Victoria Peak, which rises to 1,805 ft. above sea level. Until after the Second World War the Peak District was reserved for Europeans and other westerners. The rationale was that many of them could not stand the climate of the lower levels and that their living habits were different from those of the Chinese population. This discrimination was bitterly resented by the Chinese and other Asian residents of Hong Kong and after World War II the restriction was removed.

During earlier decades, Kowloon was occupied by smaller and less important business firms and residences. Here more land was available, and the developed area was steadily pushed northward, further and further into the hinterland.

Hong Kong lies within the tropics; the summers are hot and humid, with an average humidity of over 80%. Even November, the best month of the year, has an average humidity of 69%. Many tropical cyclones or typhoons pass close to Hong Kong, and sometimes hit it, bringing heavy rains and gale force winds. The winds, on occasion, reach hurricane force and cause great destruction of life and property.

In such a climate, without modern sanitation, it is not surprising that epidemics were frequent in the earlier days of the Colony. Malaria was a scourge for many decades, and from time to time plague, small-

pox, cholera, and typhoid killed many residents. Tuberculosis, though much less of a problem nowadays, still claims many victims, mainly because of the overcrowded living conditions.

Hong Kong's 1861 census showed that its population had grown from under 24,000 in 1845 (of whom some 23,000 were Chinese) to almost 120,000 (of whom over 116,000 were Chinese). By 1941, it is estimated to have been 1,600,000, dropping to 600,000 by August, 1945 (the missing million being primarily Chinese who went to China during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong). After the war, the population grew and reached approximately 1,800,000 by the end of 1947. By 1966 it had increased to over 3,700,000; and by the early 1970's to around four million.

Hong Kong's population, then as now, consisted of two groups: the tiny minority of British and other non-Chinese; and the Chinese, who form about 98% of the total.

The Europeans, mainly British, who came to Hong Kong in its early decades considered that they had come to an area of very primitive living conditions. The few who brought wives to Asia left them in the relative comfort of Macao. Mostly, however, they were adventurous types who had come to the East to make their fortunes. Later, perhaps, they would go home to marry and raise families in their own culture.

In the meantime, they followed a time-honoured path and entered into alliances of one sort or another with local girls. Normally, the couples did not live together as family units. The social pressures on the British members of such unions and the very different living habits and customs usually required that they live apart. The children, of course, stayed with their mothers, growing up in a matriarchal society with the fathers providing financial support.

The social and psychological problems involved in such situations elsewhere have been the subject of much investigation. That they leave deep emotional scars, especially on the children, is not to be doubted. But in Hong Kong the problem had unique elements because of the traditional Chinese view of marriage.

Somehow, out of this difficult situation, a Eurasian community emerged. Some of its leaders felt that their community was so small that it would be difficult for it to maintain a separate existence; the majority therefore identified themselves with the Chinese and tried in every way to be as "Chinese" as possible. They wore Chinese clothes, ate Chinese food, went to Chinese schools and used Chinese names. The rarely seen European parents of Eurasian children were provided with

Chinese names to be used on family ancestral tablets and on tombstones.

Some Eurasian families used English names for general purposes, though among their Chinese friends they, too, were known by a Chinese name, often one that resembled in sound their English one. Some of the Chinese names, though, had very little resemblance to the English originals, but had a propitious meaning in Chinese.

The families which identified themselves with the Chinese usually sent their sons first to Chinese schools where the curriculum was based on a study of the Confucian classics. After some years in such a school, by which time they had acquired a working knowledge of written Chinese, the boys would enter the Government Central School, which was the predecessor of Queen's College. In this school they continued to study, in Chinese, Chinese language, literature and history, with all other subjects taught in English. In addition they studied the English language intensively so that by the time they graduated from this school they had a working knowledge of both languages and were able to fill clerical jobs in Government offices or in commercial firms.

In the late nineteenth century and on into the twentieth, there was considerable social prejudice against Eurasians from both Europeans and Chinese. This prejudice made many of them the more determined to "make good." They must have felt that, human nature being what it often is, their best course was to make a lot of money, for with wealth would come power and prestige. They were also determined that after they had attained this objective they would contribute generously to local charities and to worthy causes in both countries of their heritage. All of which, no doubt, helped to make them what they eventually became—leaders in the Hong Kong community. Some of the principal members of the Eurasian community established an organisation called the Welfare League to give assistance, mainly financial, to Hong Kong Eurasians to help them overcome various kinds of hardship.

In the second generation, families who could afford it often sent their sons abroad to study, but only a few sent their daughters away and these eventually became assimilated into British society. Although some of those who went abroad had already acquired a grounding in the Chinese written language and in Chinese culture, after a number of years overseas—and in those days it was almost impossible for them to return to Hong Kong for visits during that period—it is not surprising that many forgot the Chinese they had learnt. A few energetic ones studied Chinese again upon their return, especially if they wanted to

work with the Chinese people. Others did not bother as it was never easy to find the time. A small minority stayed abroad and never, or seldom, returned home.

In the Eurasian community today most of the younger generation accept quite naturally the duality of their racial heritage. Except to very conservative Chinese or Europeans it simply is not important any more. Moreover, their numbers have grown considerably by inter-marriage and it is well recognized that many of the most successful people in Hong Kong are Eurasian, so that it is no longer felt to be a handicap to belong to this group, even though it remains a small minority.

According to traditional Chinese law and custom, a man, especially if his wife bore him no male offspring, could legally and with full social approval, take as many concubines as he wished. The husband first had to obtain the consent of his wife who herself sometimes chose the concubine. A "lucky" day was chosen for the concubine to be brought into the household by a ceremony known as "yap kung," during which the concubine served tea to the principal wife (and in very conservative families also "kowitzed"<sup>1</sup> to her). The principal wife would give the concubine a new name, to be used henceforth in the household, and, inevitably, a red packet of "lucky money."

The concubine, depending on personal taste and circumstances, might either reside in the wife's household or be housed elsewhere. In either case, she would on all festival days pay her respects in person to the principal wife. Her status was halfway between that of a member of the family and a respected servant. If she produced children, especially male offspring, this status was automatically much enhanced.

In view of this acknowledged inferiority, daughters of wealthy or even of highly respected families would not consent to become concubines. But many women from poorer families, especially ones who had grown up in wealthier homes as servants or "mui tsai" considered themselves fortunate to be chosen as a concubine by a wealthy man and so assured of comfort and security. The concubine's children had equal legal status with the principal wife's children.

It happened occasionally that a much desired woman came from a family which was unwilling to consider allowing its daughter to accept an inferior status. To deal with this problem, a status was devised

1 The "kowitz" ceremony was used to show full respect. In "kowitzing" to deities, a person would kneel three times and bow the head so as to touch the ground or floor three times at each kneeling; the "kowitz" for live persons (except for the Emperor) required only one kneeling.

known as "p'ing ts'ai," i.e., "level" or "equal" wife. The status of the "p'ing ts'ai" was equal in every way to that of the principal wife, though because of the seniority of the principal wife, the "p'ing ts'ai" always gave her precedence. The arrangement was uncommon and is not even referred to in the *Ta Ch'ing Lu Li*, but it was the basis for my mother's marriage to Father.

Until approximately the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, the Chinese custom was for the parents of young people to arrange the marriages of their children. More conservative families, if they did not know a suitable candidate, employed professional match-makers. These women would visit families in which there were young, and presumably suitable people, and ask for the dates and hours of their birth, and if available, perhaps also obtain a photograph. They then went to families with unmarried young people of the opposite sex, and tried to interest prospective parents-in-law in their candidate(s).

It should be remembered that traditionally Chinese think of marriage as an alliance between families rather than as a personal bond between individuals. The details of the date and hour of birth were important for superstitious reasons, since it was believed that astrological methods could foretell whether the two young persons would get along together. There was a complicated method of placing documents containing such details, written on red paper according to prescribed forms, before the family shrine, and then waiting to see if counter-indicating omens, such as crockery being broken, occurred during the ensuing days.

If all seemed to go well, the young man would be informed of the proposed betrothal, and usually would be given an opportunity to see the girl from a distance. She, on the other hand, would normally be kept ignorant of the proposal. In recent decades the young people involved were usually given the opportunity of meeting each other, though until the nineteen twenties the family always made the original selection.

A point of ancient law that seemed grossly unfair to most thinking people was the law of inheritance. The Nationalist Chinese Civil Code of 1930 and the 1949 laws of the (Communist) People's Republic both gave equal inheritance rights to sons and daughters; but in Hong Kong, and especially in the rural New Territories, Manchu or Ch'ing law still prevailed. Daughters were not entitled to any share of the inheritance, though a certain sum was set aside before division amongst the sons (or their heirs) to provide for the marriage expenses of unmarried daughters.

They were also entitled to maintenance until they married. Further, no special provision was made for a widow, though she could normally expect to be cared for by the estate, if it were large enough, and by those who succeeded to it. Even concubines who had no offspring were entitled to maintenance for the rest of their lives.

In Hong Kong's rural New Territories, custom made the position of women even worse than it was in the urban areas. Daughters were never allowed to inherit land nor the implements or animals used to cultivate that land. Because Chinese custom forbade people of the same surname to marry each other, and since most villages contained mainly people with the same surname, marriage partners had to be sought in other villages. The logic of the inheritance law was that it would be inconvenient, to say the least, for a son-in-law to have to till land in a village miles away as he would if his bride were permitted to have land as part of her dowry or to inherit it from a deceased father. On the other hand, as the villagers had most or even all of their wealth in land, there was very little else which daughters could inherit.

*The author  
outside main entrance of "Idlewild"*



*Father and Mamma,  
early 1900's*



## OUR THREE PARENTS

Ours was not a typical Hong Kong family. It was very well known not only in Hong Kong, its native "village", but also in parts of China, England and elsewhere.

We had three parents: my father, Sir Robert Ho Tung,<sup>2</sup> my mother, "Lady Clara Ho Tung," and Father's first wife, "Lady Ho Tung" or "Lady Margaret," who was childless. In accordance with Chinese tradition, she herself arranged for my mother to be also married to Father, as a "p'ing ts'ai" or "equal wife." We children were taught to call our mother "Mamma" and Father's first wife "Mother."

Father, affectionately referred to in his old age as "The Grand Old Man of Hong Kong," was one of the first Chinese or Eurasians to be knighted. He was made a Knight Bachelor by King George V in 1915 and, a few years before his death, a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (K.B.E.) by Queen Elizabeth II. He also received honours and decorations from Hong Kong, from the Governments of China, Portugal, France, Germany, Italy, and Annam, from His Holiness

2 His Chinese surname was Ho and his original given name was "K'ai Tung." For use in English, he later dropped the "K'ai" part of his given name and used "Ho Tung" as his surname without any given name. When he was first knighted, in 1915, he began using an English given name, and became known as Sir Robert Ho Tung. In Chinese, he continued to use "Ho," as his surname and either "Tung" or "K'ai Tung" as his given name.

Originally he had all his children use as their English surname "Ho Tung," but as they grew up many of them modified this according to their individual preferences, some using "Ho," others "Ho Tung," or "Hotung."

the Pope and from the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. He was one of the first Honorary Doctors of Law of the University of Hong Kong.

He became well known both for his success in the business world and for his philanthropy. For almost a century, he participated in the steady development of Hong Kong—from fishing village to “Pearl of the Orient.” He was always exceedingly busy, with business or charitable affairs or caring for his very poor health, and it was no easy matter for even members of his own family to see him.

Primarily because of Father, our family life was also unusual. When in Hong Kong, he lived in a separate house instead of with his children, so that they would not disturb him. Even when he stayed in the same house, it was in a separate section to which we did not have easy access. When we were young, our mother was the liaison between us and Father. As we grew older, if any of us wanted to see him we would have to ask for an appointment, which would normally last for about fifteen minutes. If there was anything special we wanted to discuss with him or any favour we wished him to grant us, we would write him a memo, so that he could think it over carefully. He might then call us to discuss the matter or send a written reply, usually typed by his secretary.

When we were young, Father was always ill, mainly with serious digestive problems, and was bed-ridden from about 1910 to 1913. He was also very nervous and did not sleep well at night, so that often, during the day, he would try to nap. The slightest sound would wake him. In order to help him fall asleep or to sleep better, Mamma or someone else would read to him, but if the reader made any noise, even that of turning a page, he might wake up. Obviously the household had to be extremely quiet while he tried to sleep. Hence it was more practical for the young children to live in a separate house. Moreover, houses on Victoria Peak in which we lived from 1906 onwards had only two or three bedrooms each; so Mamma and her children occupied two houses, while Father and his staff lived in a third. Father’s first wife never moved to the Peak.

In 1913, after he had recovered from his long illness, Father resumed his business affairs, but still spent much time resting and relaxing between appointments and meetings. Meanwhile, we were busy with our studies and, living as we did in separate houses, it became even more difficult for us to arrange to see him. From time to time, he would invite one or more of us to his house to lunch with him, or to go with him to Macao. However, even then we only saw him at lunch, he

eating his special diet, while we very much enjoyed the meal served by the Macao ferry steamer.

I must admit that as a child I often felt emotional hunger and disappointment because the Father we had been taught by Mamma to hero-worship was absent from our everyday family life. It is, of course, true that in many Chinese families the contact between fathers and daughters was scant, but at least the fathers' relationship with their sons was often close. In our family even this was missing; in our young days he was, frankly, very much of a stranger to me. From 1926, I was frequently away from Hong Kong. I wrote home regularly, however, and from time to time he personally sent me a reply, which I very much valued. Then, in the summer of 1928 I spent a few weeks with him in Macao, and in 1932 I travelled with him and Mother to England and Europe for several months as his secretary, thus getting to know and appreciate him much better. Our relationship deepened during the last ten years of his life when my daughter and I lived in his household.

Mamma, on the other hand, was full of love and affection. She regarded her husband and children as her main responsibilities, and in that order. In our early years when she was in her thirties, she literally idolised him. At our fatherless family meals, Mamma created for us an idealised image of Father and his personality. She emphasised how devoted a son he was to his mother and how kind and benevolent an employer to his household servants and business staff. We learnt that he was an able businessman who, through foresight, hard word and engaging personality, had been successful and, despite very humble beginnings, had become one of the wealthiest men in Hong Kong. We learnt, also, that he was generous in his donations to worthy causes, as was obvious from the stories in the local newspapers. Mamma almost invariably urged him to even greater benefactions, but usually would not discuss them with us until after they had been announced. She frequently quoted a Chinese saying to the effect that a woman should teach her children at the meal table and encourage her husband at night in bed. This was the colloquial version of a traditional Chinese ideal for married women, "shang fu chiao tzu," literally "to assist her husband and educate her children."

After years of devoting herself to the needs of her husband and children, when she felt that neither any longer required her full attention, Mamma gave her time freely to her religion, her relatives and friends, and to educational and charitable projects. Through these activities, literally thousands of people in Hong Kong got to know her

or at least to know of her. She endeavoured to live in accordance with the basic principles of her Buddhist religion, to be filled with compassion and love. She also carefully followed traditional Confucian moral principles: to show the proper respect to one's parents and one's siblings, to be loyal and trustworthy, to have good manners, to do good deeds, to be frugal and to avoid doing wrong things. These were the so-called "eight virtues" of the Confucian school of thought. To the Chinese, religions are not mutually exclusive, and she tried to live according to both Buddhist and Confucian teachings.

She was kind and compassionate to dumb animals. For many years she served on the Committee of the Hong Kong Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and built a Dogs' Home to be run by the Society. Mamma was also a voluntary nurse and an amateur social worker.

Born in Hong Kong, she was a loyal citizen thereof and, when appropriate, contributed to it with service as well as financially. Although Eurasian, she identified herself with the Chinese and did all she could to promote China's welfare, encouraging her children to follow her lead.

When Father received his first knighthood in 1915, a problem was posed for friends who understood our family structure and wanted to devise an appropriate way to address my mother. For she was undoubtedly the wife of a British Knight to whom she had been married with full honours and status according to accepted Chinese custom. Yet according to British protocol, only one "Ladyship" could officially be recognised.

Despite the protocol involved, our friends and advisers decided to refer to our father's first wife as Lady Ho Tung (or sometimes, to distinguish her specifically from our own mother, as "Lady Margaret," "Lady Mak," or simply "Lady M"), and to call our mother "Lady Clara Ho Tung" or sometimes also "Lady Ho Tung," realising that properly only a peer's daughter is entitled to be so addressed. The name Lady Clara Ho Tung was chiefly used in social rather than official circles, and everybody in Hong Kong knew that we did not pretend to belong to the peerage. In time, therefore, the practice became so well accepted that it was continued even after the death of the two women involved.

Mamma's secular Chinese name was Ho Cheung Ching Yung. She was born on the 19th of December, 1875, which was the twenty-second day of the eleventh lunar month.\* It was the first year of the reign of the Emperor Kuang Hsü, in the Year of the Boar. She died on January

\* See Appendix A

5, 1938, the fourth day of the twelfth moon. By that time China had officially adopted the solar calendar, and 1938 was the twenty-seventh year of the Chinese Republic. However, the lunar date is still used for religious ceremonies, including those held annually in her memory at the Buddhist temple which she established.

In our childhood, Mamma often told us of her early years. She was the first-born, and had a sister and two brothers. Unfortunately, her sister and the elder of the two brothers died within a short time of each other. Mamma often told us how, following these deaths, she managed to save her own mother from suicide. Our Grandmother, as a dutiful daughter-in-law, had to write a report of the sad deaths of her children to her mother-in-law. The mother-in-law, quite a dictatorial personality, instead of comforting her distraught daughter-in-law, wrote what is for modern concepts an incredible reply. "Above you," she said, "you cannot serve your parents-in-law; on your level, you cannot be a suitable mate to your husband; and below you, you cannot rear your children properly; you had better go and die."



*Mamma's father  
Mr Cheung Tak Fai*



*Mamma's mother  
"P'aw P'aw"  
Mrs. Cheung Tak Fai*

This letter, needless to say, had an extreme effect on Grandmother. Mamma, although very young, noticed the great distress the letter caused, and watched her mother closely. That night Grandmother tried to hang herself, but Mamma managed to stop her.

Although Mamma's paternal grandmother was so terribly unkind on this occasion, we were told of other incidents which showed that she was often considerate. These, however, occurred earlier, before

Mamma and her parents moved to Shanghai, where the children died, and later to Kiu Kiang, an upstream port on the Yangtze River. Mamma often talked about the time when, as a little child, she was taken by her grandmother in a sedan chair to the top of Hong Kong's Victoria Peak. "Did you enjoy yourself today?" her grandmother inquired. Mamma, rather cheekily for a Chinese granddaughter, replied, "Yes, it was nice; but it would have been better if I could have gone up in my own sedan chair."

Though Mamma showed intellectual promise, her parents did not insist that she go to school, especially since, in those days, there were few regular schools for girls. When she was nine, they did start her schooling, but we do not know what kind of school it was. She told us she did not like it, and her parents allowed her to stop. In those days no one expected girls to learn to read and write, particularly since they could not sit for the public examinations nor could they hold public office.

Mamma's parents were very fond of her and often, dressed like a boy, she went with her father visiting his friends. He was fond of the Chinese opera and knew many opera singers. The opera companies were then all male. So it was necessary for her to be dressed like a boy when they went backstage.

He told her mother that if "Ba-ba-tsai" (Mamma's pet name) did not want to get married, she was not to be forced to do so. He realized that his daughter had a strong personality and if unsuitably married would be desperately unhappy. Despite its "un-Chineseness," her mother promised to remember this injunction. When Mamma was eighteen (according to Chinese reckoning, or sixteen in Western terms), her father suddenly died.

Many times Mamma described to us the scene as she sat at her dying father's bedside. And she often referred to two incidents connected with his last illness. One concerned Mr. Au-Yang Wai Chang, who was a private student of Grandfather's. Silently, Mr. Au-Yang sat on one side of the sick man's deathbed and Mamma on the other. For, in those days people of the upper classes were so polite and reserved that they did not converse with those of the opposite sex. Mamma was always grateful for his devotion to her father and many years later they arranged for her second daughter to marry Mr. Au-Yang's eldest son.

The other incident sounds superstitious, or touching on the supernatural. When some member of her family was about to pass away, Mamma told us, she would involuntarily visualise some of her already

departed relatives. Just before her father died, for instance, she "saw" her dead younger sister standing at the foot of their father's bed. She felt that was a bad omen, as if the sister had come to fetch the father; the next day he died.

Mamma's father had been working for the Chinese Customs Service in Kiu Kiang. After his death, Grandmother decided that it would be unwise for the family to stay there. She arranged to take Grandfather's coffin back to be interred in Hong Kong, where, in accordance with tradition, he could be buried in his native soil. So Grandmother brought her daughter, then about nineteen, and her eleven year old son, Cheung Pui-kai, back to Hong Kong. Grandfather was buried in a cemetery near Happy Valley, in an area called the "Coffee Gardens."

Mamma missed her father very much and went into deep mourning. She stayed at home and never went out. To pass the time, she taught herself to read as best she could, and finally understood what opportunities she had missed by having refused to go to school. There were many books in her house, among them familiar story books. She started with the little that she knew, guessed at words and phrases, and slowly taught herself to read each story. With these little story books began her academic education.

Father was born on December 22, 1862, which happened that year to be the day of the Winter Solstice, a major Chinese festival day. Although the second child in his family, he was its eldest son. He was called Tung, originally K'ai-tung, which means "starting" or "originating" and "East." The symbolism was that of the sun rising in the East, thus indicating that he was the first-born son. "K'ai" was the generational name to be used by all his brothers, but for convenience they dropped it, possibly when they started working. Father also had a "style" name "Hui-sang" meaning "born at dawn." His Chinese friends often called him this, which was the polite thing to do.

The members of Chinese families were always numbered according to seniority and this determined the manner in which we referred to our uncles and aunts for example. The Chinese language is much more specific than English in describing familial relationships. For instance, not only are the words used for paternal uncles or aunts different from those used for similar maternal relatives, but the words to be used specify whether the uncle or aunt is younger or older than one's parent. So a child soon understands how the various members of his extended family are related to his parents, and consequently to himself. In our

family we had our "First Elder Paternal Aunt," "Third," "Fourth," "Fifth," and "Sixth Younger Paternal Uncles," and "Seventh," and "Eighth Younger Paternal Aunts." We had only one "Maternal Uncle."

Father's elder sister married into a Choy family and had a son and a daughter. She died young, and none of us children knew her. Our Third Uncle, Mr. Ho Fook, was, like Father, a successful businessman and philanthropist. He preferred to keep his benefactions quiet and even his family was surprised at the large number of poor people who came to his funeral in 1926 because he had helped them in one way or another.

After Father retired, because of poor health, from the compradoreship<sup>3</sup> of Messrs. Jardine, Matheson and Company, Uncle Ho Fook was appointed to the position and remained there until he retired several decades later. He was also for some years an unofficial member of the Legislative Council, being one of the two members to represent the Chinese Community. Uncle Ho Fook's name has been perpetuated in the scholarships he donated to the University of Hong Kong and to his old school, Queen's College, and is to be found on one of the buildings of the University near the western gate of the campus.

Our Fourth Uncle, K'ai Moon, was adopted by another family, in a typically Chinese manner literally given away, and his name is not even included on Grandmother's tombstone. The story goes that Grandmother was travelling on a boat with several of her children. A fellow-traveller, a woman who knew and admired her, said, "Oh, you are so fortunate, you have so many boys and I don't have any at all." So it was arranged for the fourth son to be adopted by this woman!

Our Fifth Uncle, Mr. Ho Kom Tong, originally K'ai Tong, was quite a character. He also worked for Messrs. Jardine, Matheson and Company and had many avocational interests. Chinese herbal medicine was one and he often practised on relatives and friends, frequently with considerable success. Another was "Fung Shui"<sup>4</sup> and he chose the burial sites for his mother, for Mamma, for himself and his family, and for many others. He was a connoisseur of Chinese antiques and had a valuable collection.

3 A Compradore is a person used by Western firms as the liaison between the European management and the Chinese staff and customers.

4 "Fung Shui," literally "wind and water," is a divination system of the Chinese by means of which sites are determined for graves, houses and other buildings. The purpose is to choose sites and arrange the placement of buildings so as to have the most propitious influence on the people concerned.

Since early childhood he had been fond of Chinese opera and was acquainted with many opera singers. In fact he learned how to sing and act and occasionally participated in charity performances. There were a few songs he did admirably and in several roles he was surprisingly effective. He was also knowledgeable about flowers and was always invited to be a judge at the annual agricultural and horticultural shows in Hong Kong and in the New Territories.

But Uncle Ho Kom Tong was probably best known for his romantic life. He had a dozen or more concubines and over thirty children! Needless to say, we only knew some of them.

Our Sixth Uncle, Ho K'ai Gaai, went first to Queen's College, then called the Central School. He was very brilliant and won the only scholarship offered in those days to a Hong Kong student to go to England for further study. We knew him as Uncle Walter because he used his English name. He became an engineer and after graduation went to South Africa and became involved in mining. He married an English lady named Louise. We saw them occasionally in Europe and in Hong Kong. Father also had two younger sisters. The son of the elder married our sister Mary.

Father was first married to Mamma's older cousin, Mak Sau-ying, who was called Margaret. They had been engaged early, but before they were married Sau-ying's mother died. Since there were no relatives with whom she could stay, it was arranged for Sau-ying to live with Father's mother, her future mother-in-law, while Father went away and lived elsewhere.

In 1881, when Sau-ying was seventeen by Chinese reckoning and Father twenty they were married and he returned to his mother's home until they set up their own household. Their failure to have children was a great disappointment both to them and to Grandmother, who was naturally anxious for her favourite and eldest son to have children of his own.

As a result of this childless state of affairs, Third Uncle, according to traditional Chinese custom, gave Father his eldest son, when the child was seven, to be adopted into our family. This happened before Father's marriage to my mother.

Although most families want a son to carry on the family name, this is essential in China, one important reason being that only a son can perform the ancestor-venerating ceremonies which are, or at least were, uniquely important in Chinese thinking. There is a Chinese saying that there are three ways of being unfilial, the worst of which is not to

have a successor. According to traditional Chinese ideas, only males were regarded as being able to succeed to the family line, because a daughter's children would have a different surname. They are referred to as "outside grandchildren."

Consequently, if a man had no sons of his own, a younger brother was, by tradition, morally bound to let an elder brother adopt his first-born son, who would henceforth be regarded as belonging to the elder branch of the family. In case a man had neither a son nor a younger brother, then one of his elder brothers had to allow him to adopt one of their younger sons. If there were no such nephews available, the man would adopt a surrogate "nephew" with the same surname, from one of his first, second or third cousins (chosen in that order) provided there was a child available of the right generation and descended from a common ancestor.

Occasionally, families had to modify this practice and a daughter arranged to have one of her sons take the surname of her father. This was called "the aunt's son returning to her own family clan."

Our "Eldest Brother," Ho Wing, was therefore much older than even the eldest of us. He had four sons and six daughters, the eldest of whom was older than I. Nonetheless, in accordance with Chinese custom, they still called us "uncles" and "aunts."

Grandmother, Father, and his first wife evidently all still hoped, however, that there was some way of enabling Father to have children of his own. Consequently, they selected a concubine for him, whose surname was Chau. But for many years the concubine also had no children.

Mother tried to do what was right and proper according to traditional Chinese ideals. It was her moral duty to help Father to have children of his own, especially a son.

Father probably first met Mamma when she and her mother returned to Hong Kong to bury her father. Mother sensed that Father admired this cousin of hers, who was beautiful, charming, and intelligent and must have decided it would be good to arrange a match between her cousin and Father. She discussed this with her Aunt, Mamma's mother, who must have realised that life would not be easy for her, a poor widow with two children to raise. In those days, the re-marriage of respectable widows in China was out of the question. She was also impressed with Father's intelligence and promise and so agreed to her daughter's marriage. Following Chinese tradition, Grandmother, of course, did not consult her daughter about whether she

wanted to marry Father.

As was pointed out earlier, Mamma was to become an "equal wife" or p'ing ts'ai, not a concubine. There would be a proper marriage ceremony at which Father would wear the full bridegroom's costume with its double red sash and Mamma would be fetched in the traditional red sedan chair. Father's two wives would then be like sisters. Mother promised my grandmother that "everything will be equal between us," and confirmed this in an unusual document of which we still have a copy.

Mamma often described to us her engagement. To make the detailed preparations easier, she had been sent away to visit someone for a few days. When she came home a servant girl could not resist telling her that during her absence she had been engaged to Father. Lacquer boxes containing engagement cakes, the servant said, were under the beds waiting to be distributed to various relatives and friends. The news made Mamma angry. When she told us the story she would remind us that her father had promised that she would not be married off if she chose not to be and she resented not having been consulted. She told us that she had even thought of suicide. However, she realized that if she did commit suicide, it would reflect very badly on Father and that this would be unfair to him. Although she did not know him very well she had occasionally seen him as he was the husband of her cousin, Sau-ying. So she decided to make the best of the situation.

After she was married, she was a devoted wife, and she and her cousin treated each other with the greatest consideration. Even after the wedding, Mother continued to call Mamma "Younger Cousin," and Mamma called her "Elder Cousin." Both referred to Father either as "Second Young Master" (because he was second amongst his siblings) or by his "style" name, Hiu Sang.

Mamma was about five feet six inches, which would be tall for a "pure" Chinese, but for a Eurasian it was average. Mother was shorter than Mamma, but of a heavier build, so some people referred to her as the "stouter Madame" and Mamma as the "slimmer Madame." Mamma was, on the whole, fairly healthy though she suffered from insomnia and palpitations of the heart. In her later years she suffered badly from rheumatism, diabetes and chronic asthma. But she did not allow these ailments to interfere with her domestic duties or her outside activities. Mother took better care of her health and lived to be 79; Mamma died when she was 62.

In her later years, Mother developed a heart murmur and had

懿範時切葭思素行受憐不付冒昧故敢瀆陳覽  
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故皇后必修乎女順者母道也以女順化天下之為婦  
女者其道猶世也且知大上有立德而皇后治乎  
懿範是此婦順俯仰後內和理其家必可長久  
若不專其權而偏從私見者非為真愛寧援條  
禮古有經權惟父母主之則母有專權之勢女  
無背範之端言乎權則思愛之厚援育之誠者  
重教事身誨知先女漸長當宜室家昔日欽望  
馬楚女因婚報德漢君指腹連姻皆重婚姻  
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夫妻歷情懇以冀求令媛同配乙君姊妹  
並肩無分妻妾若以側室視之神靈不佑可  
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現今千金未能取信予之心誠故修寸楷仰  
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懷肅此奉達

婦人福安

楊世  
何參氏謹稟  
冬月

表味謹啟

to restrict her activities considerably. For a long time she suffered badly from a uterine tumour even though it had been discovered during one of her early visits to America. She was terribly afraid of operations, and would not even consider having the tumour removed. This was probably the main reason why she could not have children. However, adopted Brother Wing was regarded as her son and she brought up Mary, Father's daughter by his concubine, after Mary's mother died. Since all of us called her "Mother" she was in practice the co-mother of eight daughters and four sons.

To distinguish Father's two wives, our Chinese relatives and friends simply used their maiden names. Mother's maiden name was "Mak," and Mamma's, "Cheung." So Mother was referred to as "Mak Nai Nai," meaning "Madame Mak," or, after Father was knighted, "Mak T'ai T'ai," meaning "Lady Mak." For Mamma, they used the surname "Cheung" instead. Their nephews and nieces in the Ho family called them "Elder Paternal Aunt"—Mak or Cheung. Those who were old enough to have known Mother before Mamma joined the Ho family, simply continued to call her "Second Elder Paternal Aunt," the number showing that Father had been number two among his siblings. Western friends called both of them "Mrs. Ho Tung," and later used the title "Lady," as described above.

Temperamentally, they were very different. Mamma was adventurous, full of courage and always ready to try new things. But Mother would never dream of undertaking any activity that seemed dangerous or out of her accepted routine.

Mother had been very strictly brought up and she often told us that as a young girl she was not even allowed to wear bedroom slippers anywhere in her house except in her bedroom. She was not permitted to slouch or lounge; consequently she always sat erect and looked dignified. She went to a school, run by a single Chinese teacher, which had one large classroom with a curtain hung down the centre of it, with the boy students seated on one side and the girls on the other. Father was also one of the students in this school and it was he who later told me about it.

The teacher must have been a good one, as Mother acquired a good practical knowledge of Chinese and could write family letters or record things about her farm whenever she wanted to do so. However, it was seldom necessary for her to do much writing herself, except when she was travelling because there was always a member of her staff about who would act as her secretary.

Mamma also could write when necessary, but in her case there was even less need to do so as, for a number of decades, one or the other of our two Chinese tutors lived in the household; several other members of her staff could be asked to write less important letters in Chinese, and she frequently called on one of us children to write for her. If she wanted to have a letter written in English, she dictated it in simple English or gave us the gist of what she wanted said. We drafted it, submitted it to Victoria for correction, copied it, and then she signed it. To write a Chinese letter, however, was more difficult.

Mamma, with the help of our tutor, corresponded with a wide circle of friends living in China. I still remember how every year in the early nineteen twenties letters were prepared for her to send New Year Greetings to these friends. Some were old family friends of decades, others people my parents had met in their travels. Mamma would describe her ideas to Mr. Leung, and in a couple of days he produced the letters on special red note paper, written (painted really) character by character, stroke by stroke, in his beautiful calligraphy and excellently composed in the flowery traditional style. It was seldom necessary to revise any of these letters. Mr. Leung wrote in a style called "grass script" which many had trouble reading and I was impressed that Mamma did not find it difficult to read. It was not even necessary for her to sign the letters, as it was customary for the person who actually wrote them to write the characters for the name of the sender as well.

Having been married in 1881, Father and his first wife celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in 1931 and, a few days before the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. By then Father was in his eightieth year, and in accordance with Chinese custom (although Mother was really three years younger), they simultaneously celebrated their "Joint Eightieth Birthdays."<sup>5</sup>

In the year after the Golden Wedding Anniversary 1932, Father arranged with Mr. H. Muctepz J.A.A., a well-known Czech artist who was in Hong Kong, to paint life-sized portraits of our three parents. Father wore a blue silk long gown and black short jacket, while the two ladies wore ceremonial gowns, the "kwa," which consists of a black satin jacket and a red silk skirt, both hand-embroidered, with gold and silver-coloured threads oversewn in beautiful patterns onto the background of red and black. However, they really sat mainly for the

<sup>5</sup> When a couple had become as old as my father and his first wife were, the Chinese regard it as quite legitimate to "up-grade" the age of one spouse in order to enable them to have a "Joint Birthday Celebration."

painting of their faces. Our old amah, Yee P'aw, wore Mamma's clothes for the other sittings so that the artist could take all the time he needed to paint the gowns without interfering too much with Mamma's activities. Similar arrangements, of course, were made for Mother and Father.

In due course, the three paintings were completed and until the outbreak of the Pacific War adorned the reception and dining rooms of the Falls, our new Peak residence. During the War they were brought down to our town house, Idlewild. The portraits of Father and Mamma are now in the Assembly Hall of the Po Kok Vocational Middle School while the one of Mother was given to the Lady Ho Tung Hall, the Women's Residence Hall of the University of Hong Kong, but was later damaged beyond use, and has been replaced by another one.

In her autobiography, Mamma states that after she had completed the mourning period for her father (in theory this is three years, but in fact it lasts for twenty-seven months), she was married, in February, 1895, "in accordance with my mother's instructions." This is a typical Chinese way for a woman to refer to her marriage. Mamma adds that her mother-in-law was very good to her and treated her like a daughter; and that she got on well with her sisters-in-law.

The next year, in the Spring of 1896, our paternal grandmother suddenly became seriously ill while she was on a visit to Canton. Two river boats in Canton were used as hotel accommodation for her and for her sons and daughters-in-law who had come from Hong Kong when they learnt that she was critically ill. According to Chinese custom, it is very important for children to be present at the death of their parents, otherwise they are regarded as being unfilial. Members of the family took turns sitting with the dying old lady. One night Mamma and Father were "on duty" together, sitting one on each side of the bed. Grandmother suddenly thought of the pregnant daughter-in-law of a friend and asked, "Has the daughter-in-law of so and so given birth yet?" They replied that she had and were asked whether it was a boy or a girl. They told her that they thought it was a girl. She sighed and said: "No matter a boy or a girl, it is equally good."

Mamma realised from the sigh and this statement that the old lady was thinking of her son and wondering whether he would ever have children of his own. Mamma said she very nearly lied, wanting to ease her mother-in-law's mind by telling her that she was already pregnant. But she felt it wiser not to do so, because if the patient recovered she would have been terribly disappointed when she learnt the truth. A few days later Grandmother died. They took her back to Hong Kong

for burial in the Chiu Yuen Cemetery.

Father was a very devoted son and long after his mother had died he carried a miniature photograph of her on his travels and set it in a place of honour in his bedroom. He said that she liked roast chicken and when she visited them on Sundays after his first marriage they always had it for her. So every Sunday after her death, roast chicken was offered at her shrine. The children and grandchildren living in the household went to the shrine to pay their respects while the chicken was being offered there.

It is fundamental for traditional Chinese to care for their parents and other elderly relatives. Their view is that since parents spend so many years bringing up their children, caring and sacrificing for them, it is only right for the younger people to show their appreciation. It is not sufficient just to provide parents with food and shelter; meeting their psychological needs is even more important. The idea that Chinese accept parental authority slavishly, or probably ever did, is a substantial exaggeration. But Chinese society does expect parents to be treated with affection and respect.

Modern concepts, especially in a place like Hong Kong, influenced as it is by the West, often make it almost impossible for married children to live with their parents, but Chinese tradition still teaches that the parents should be looked after as well as possible.

## **OUR FAMILY MEMBERS: THE WEB OF KINSHIP AND CLOSE FRIENDS**

The year their mother-in-law died, Mamma and Mother went to Ting Hu Mountain in Kwang Tung province to have prayers said in her memory. There was in the temple a Reclining Buddha who seemed to be lying on a couch. Mother said to Mamma: "Cousin, you had better say your prayers to this Reclining Buddha. You and The Second Young Master often say you suffer from insomnia. Pray to this Sleeping Buddha and ask him to help you to sleep better." So Mamma burned her incense and said her prayers. Then, as was customary, she obtained the paper slip which was supposed to tell her fortune and went to ask the priest to interpret it for her. The priest said to her: "Next year you had better come to give your thanks." It turned out that the Reclining Buddha was not meant to help people sleep better, but to bring fertility to the worshippers. Sure enough, next year Mamma's first child and eldest daughter, Victoria, was born. We were all given Chinese names as well as English ones, but I won't confuse the reader with these. Except for my brother Shai Lai (Robbie) we were generally known by our English names. Eva and I gave ourselves additional Chinese names which sound like our English ones and Eddie usually signed himself as Edward S.K. Hotung, the initials standing for Sai Kim.

As they were going to the mountain again in any case, Mother and Mamma did hold a Thanksgiving service there. Victoria's birth was a very significant event in the family, Father having been childless for so long. He was born in 1862 and Victoria in 1897, so he was then thirty-five years old which in those days was late for a man to have his first-born.

Fifteen months later came the first son, Henry. On December 31st, 1899, a second daughter, Daisy, was born. Mamma often told us that soon after Daisy was born, Father came into the room and asked whether the child was a boy or a girl. Mamma told him it was a girl. He remarked, in Chinese, "Another girl?" Mamma felt that he was disappointed and so she replied, "You may expect that I shall be having many more girls, and if you do not want to have girls, you had better not have any more children!" She was an accurate prophet and we ended by having in the family eight girls and four boys, one of whom was adopted.

When Daisy was born, Father's concubine was also pregnant, and three months later (in March 1900) also gave birth to a daughter, Mary, who became the "Third Young Mistress" of the family. The Chinese classify a concubine's children with those of a wife. Unfortunately, after the birth her mother was for many years an invalid and finally died when Mary was nine.

When Daisy was six months old she had pneumonia; Henry, who was twenty months old, developed it also. He became very ill and died a week later. Mamma was overwhelmed by the loss of her first-born son and eulogized his memory. In the Tung Lin Kok Yuen temple (which, as we shall see, she built later) Henry's portrait hangs, side by side with those of our grandparents.

The next child, Eddie, was born in March 1902. By this time, Father was forty years old and it was a great joy to him and the family to have another son. Unfortunately, in October, eight months later, Eddie became ill. Mamma took him to Macao where the climate seemed to suit him better, but a year after Henry's death, in May 1903, Eddie fell ill again. He was sick for months and finally he and Mamma moved into Uncle Ho Fook's household, the feeling being that Mrs. Ho Fook, who had nine children, would be able to help Mamma care for him.

Meanwhile Mamma had become pregnant again and the time was approaching for her delivery. But she was afraid that if she left Mrs. Ho Fook's to give birth, Eddie might die. She had a very strong will and told us later that she tried by sheer willpower to postpone the delivery as long as possible. Finally she had to go home for the childbirth which was long overdue. She said that when the baby, named Eva, was born she seemed almost dried up. This was at the end of July 1903, and in September Mamma left her with a wet nurse and took Eddie to Japan, which at that time of the year is much cooler than Hong Kong. Eddie seemed to improve almost immediately. Consequently, for the next few



*Father in Tsingtao, 1915*



*Robbie, Irene, Eva, Eddie, Daisy and Victoria, 1907*

years she took Eddie to Japan for the summer to lessen his exposure to the damp heat of Hong Kong.

In 1906 Father bought a house on the cooler heights of Hong Kong's Victoria Peak. The Peak, as I pointed out earlier, was reserved for Europeans; but Father got special permission to live there. An English friend bought several houses for him, and soon Mamma and the children moved in. After that it was no longer necessary to take Eddie to Japan each year, since in the summer the difference between the temperature of the Peak and that of the town is often as much as 10° F.

I was born in 1904, which meant that Eddie, Eva, and I were born fifteen months apart. Mamma realised the children were coming too close together, but in those days there was little that a good Chinese



*Daisy, Eddie, Eva, Victoria and Jean  
Irene and Robbie in 1908*

wife would, or could, do about it. After I was born, she did wait for longer periods before risking having more children. Robbie (Shai Lai), Jean, and Grace, born in 1906, 1908, and 1910, respectively, were spaced by at least twenty months. Jean was the sixth and Grace the seventh daughter in the family.

After that we all thought that Mamma would have no more children. In 1915, Father, Mamma, and Victoria visited the port city of Tsingtao on China's Shantung Peninsula. One of the servants said to us, "You know your mother is going to bring a baby back." We said that we didn't believe it but she pointed out that they had taken all the baby things away with them and offered to bet us twenty (Hong Kong) cents that they would bring a baby back. We took the bet and lost, for in August 1915 they wrote home: "You will be interested to hear that you have a little baby sister and she is called Florence, after Florence Nightingale."

The birth of Florence ended Mamma's childbearing; this gave Father eight daughters and four sons, one of whom was our adopted brother Ho Wing. Except for Ho Wing and Henry, all survived him.

Our Maternal Grandmother, or P'aw P'aw, as we called her, constantly stayed with us when we were very young to enable Mamma to devote her attention to Father, who was exceedingly ill at the time. We loved P'aw P'aw as she was warm, matronly and loving.

Just about a year after P'aw P'aw's death, our maternal aunt, Bessie, became very ill. Some days after a serious gynecological operation she lay dying, and yet would not die. Uncle had taken two adjoining rooms in the Hospital and, coming into the additional room, asked Mamma to go in and comfort his wife. He felt she was worried, he said, because she did not trust him to bring up their children. Mamma went in to speak to her sister-in-law, urging her not to worry, adding that if anything unfortunate should happen to her, Mamma would regard Aunt Bessie's children as her own. She then returned to the adjoining room and soon after word came that Bessie had died, evidently relieved. As it happened, Bessie's mother, Auntie Ho Fook, raised the two girls, Maggie and Lily, in her own household, with the two boys, Hong and Ling joining our very large family. Mamma treated them as her own children, but when they were old enough they went back to live with their father in North China.

As the family grew larger, Victoria, the eldest, assumed more and more household responsibilities, a process which ended only with her marriage to Lo Man Kam (known as "M.K.") in 1918.

“M.K.,” later knighted as Sir Man Kam Lo, was the son of Mamma’s good friends Mr. and Mrs. Lo Cheung Siu and a nephew of the wife of Uncle Ho Fook. Mamma was undoubtedly attracted to this handsome, bright, Eurasian lad early on. He was educated in England and became a lawyer, returning to Hong Kong in 1915 after winning all the honours in his law examinations. Soon after his return, Mamma began paying frequent visits to the Lo family; we discovered later that the two mothers had been busy planning a marriage between Victoria



*Victoria and Lo Man Kam's (known as M.K.) Wedding, 4th April, 1918*

and “M.K.” Soon “M.K.” started coming to the Peak regularly at weekends on the pretext of teaching us tennis. Mamma was anxious for her eldest daughter’s happiness and arranged an elaborate wedding with a large dowry for her. Many of the dowry articles, especially the furniture, are still in excellent condition, more than fifty years later. All three of our parents were of course present at the wedding, together with hundreds of relatives and friends. The Governor of Hong Kong, Sir Henry May, attended and we have a group photograph of the family and

some of the distinguished guests, standing on a wide flight of steps in the garden at Idlewild. I was the Maid of Honour and Jean and Grace were the Bridesmaids.

Mamma's second daughter, Daisy, married the eldest son of Maternal Grandfather's devoted student, Mr. Au-Yang Wai Chang, a Cantonese businessman who lived in Hankow in Central China. The wedding took place in Shanghai, and Daisy went to live with her husband's family. Unfortunately, Daisy's husband died a few years later. There were no children.

After graduating from the University of Hong Kong in 1924 Eddie went to England for advanced studies in Economics. He married an Irish girl, Mordia O'Shea, and did not inform Father or Mother (both of whom happened to be in England at the time) until he was asked by Father to return to Hong Kong as Assistant Compradore in the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank. They were much annoyed that he did not take them into his confidence and it led to prolonged suffering and heartaches for Mamma. For, although Eddie was her favourite child, she felt it her duty to support her husband's stand in a matter of this kind.

A few years later Eddie and his family settled in Shanghai and Mamma saw her grandchildren during her occasional visits to that city.

In June 1928 Robbie married Hesta, the elder of two daughters of a Eurasian family named Hung. Robbie had first met her through our sister Jean, who was Hesta's classmate, and through Hesta's younger brother who was a friend of Robbie's. They have two children.

On the 19th of March, 1929, Jean married Billy Gittins, an Electrical Engineering graduate of the University of Hong Kong who was then lecturing in Physics at his Alma Mater. His was a Eurasian family which used its Western name.

Mamma appreciated Billy very much. He was a good practical person and gave her much useful advice on her various building projects, especially "The Falls" and the Buddhist temple. The electrical engineering firm he joined undertook the wiring of Mamma's new temple, and Billy assisted her as a volunteer "clerk-of-works."

Jean and Billy's first child Elizabeth (Betty) was born in 1930. In 1935 they had a son, John, who was born prematurely. He was a delicate child, and his parents put both children in a boarding school in Australia.

In 1933 Grace married Lo Man Ho, the youngest brother of Victoria's husband "M.K.," called Horace. He had also studied Law, and first practised in the firm of Lo and Lo, established by his two elder brothers. In later years, after the Second World War, he became

a Hong Kong magistrate.

Florence married Dr. K.C. Yeo, whose home was originally in Penang, Malaysia. He had gone to the University of Hong Kong for his medical degree and to England for post-graduate studies in tropical medicine and public health. He did not return to Penang but joined the Hong Kong Medical Department, in which he remained for some thirty years, eventually becoming the first Chinese Director of Medical and Health Services.

New grandchildren were added to the family steadily much to Mamma's delight. She was exceedingly fond of all of them and, after The Falls was built, as many of them as possible, with their parents, were invited to spend every summer with her.

Meanwhile, Father and Mother arranged for Mary to be married to our first cousin, Wong Sik Lam, a Civil Engineer trained in England.

When Mamma died, only two of her children were unmarried. Eva is still single, and I did not marry until September 1940, after the mourning period for Mamma was over. I met my husband, Cheng Hsiang Hsien in 1926 when I first visited Peking and stayed in his sister's home. I was much interested to meet various members of his illustrious family as he was the great-great-grandson of Imperial Commissioner Lin Tse Hsu, who had confiscated and destroyed the opium in Canton in 1839. The Commissioner is still honoured in China as a national hero.

Shortly after we met, H.H. voluntarily helped me straighten out some details of a coal mining business in which Father and my maternal uncle were involved. But having just graduated from the University, I was still thirsty for knowledge and was not ready to get married. I also sensed that Mamma did not like my marrying someone who lived so far away as Peking, wanting to have us all near her.

In 1937, after I had obtained my Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of London, I joined the Chinese Ministry of Education in Nanking as "Editor by Special Appointment." One of my first duties was to write some and edit others of a series of handbooks in English on the various branches of the Chinese educational system. Later I was also asked to join the Inspectors assigned to inspect the secondary schools in the cities of Nanking and Shanghai.

At that time H.H. was also in Nanking, hoping to be engaged as Personnel Manager for a large chemical factory, but unfortunately he did not get the position.

When the Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937, H.H. escorted me to Hong Kong and remained there trying to start an industrial

chemical project, but the Second World War prevented him from succeeding. As I have already said, after the mourning period for Mamma was over in 1940 H.H. and I were married, but I was to be bride, mother, and widow within twenty months.

I have made an analysis of the race or nationality of those who married into our family (not counting adopted Brother Wing's children, most of whom married Chinese). Oddly enough, none of the eighteen grandchildren married Eurasians.

In China, relationships between families joined by marriage are regarded as being more important than they are in the West. There is a special Chinese expression, "ch'un gaa" which I believe should be introduced into English. It means, literally, "related family or families," and refers to the four parents of a married couple. There are certain social obligations that "ch'un gaas" must perform. For instance, when there is a death in one family, it is obligatory for the "ch'un gaa" to visit the bereaved, send an expression of condolence and to attend the funeral. In sickness, they are expected to visit. Failure to observe such social obligations would be gross negligence. Our family had many "ch'un gaas," but half of them did not live in Hong Kong. Mary's mother-in-law was really our Seventh Aunt, so she retained that status, as it is regarded as being closer than that of a "ch'un gaa." The parents of Mrs. Ho Wing, of Hesta and of Billy were regarded as the only regular "ch'un gaas" of our family living in Hong Kong.

M.K. and Horace were, as said, brothers but their parents were Eddie's "Godparents." Long before Victoria's marriage, our family had called her future parents-in-law by special names appropriate to this "Godparent" relationship and even after the marriage they were frequently called by these names.

Another Chinese relationship of interest is that of "sworn brothers" a relationship that was glorified in the famous historical novel *The Three Kingdoms*.<sup>6</sup> In this novel the three principal characters had become "sworn brothers," and in the first chapter of the book there is a detailed description of the elaborate religious ceremony this entails. Most young people in traditional China have read or heard the story and many are inspired to have "sworn brothers." In the oath the three heroes had sworn that they would co-operate with each other to

6 It was published in English by the Charles F. Tuttle Co. under the title *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, translated by C.H. Brewitt-Taylor.

help the suffering, to be loyal to the country and to comfort the people. The brothers swear that they wish to die in the same year, in the same month, and on the same day: in other words, to protect and defend each other unto death. They call upon Heaven and Earth as their witness.

Mamma's father had three such "sworn brothers," all Eurasians like himself, and he and his family treated them as if they really were his brothers. They were Mr. Sin Tak Fan, Mr. Chan Kai Ming and Mr. She Ping Kwong. Mamma called them "Uncle," their wives "Auntie" and their children "Sister" or "Brother," as if they were really her cousins. Mr. Chan's mother became blind and Mamma treated her as if she were her real grandmother.

Mamma was particularly fond of and greatly admired Mrs. She, who had married into the She family after her husband's first wife had died leaving three grown daughters, the eldest of whom was already married. Mrs. She bore her husband three sons, the youngest of whom was not born until seven months after the father had died. Although life was not too comfortable for this young widow, with industry and frugality she managed to bring up her family and even helped rear some of her grandchildren, the eldest daughter being in very poor health for many years. Two She daughters and two Sin girls married into the Ho family. Before the Second World War, family celebrations, such as wedding banquets, were invariably attended by members of these "ch'un gaa" families.

Another Chinese custom is for close friends to call each other "Brother" or "Sister" and often to behave as if they were related. Many such friends called on my parents during the Lunar New Year, or on such occasions as "Grand" Birthdays or Wedding celebrations to convey their greetings to Second Elder Brother and Second Elder Sister-in-law.

Many of the leaders of the Hong Kong community were, of course, personal friends of my three parents. For instance, there was the other nonagenarian, Sir Shouson Chow, who liked to joke about the idea that he may have been descended from the pirates of Aberdeen—a fishing village on the south side of Hong Kong island. For many years an adviser to the Hong Kong Government, he was the first Chinese member of its Executive Council, having been appointed in 1926. He used to vie with Father in longevity, as both hoped to "make the century." Neither of them succeeded, but even though Sir Shouson was older, he outlived Father. It was Sir Shouson who helped Mamma obtain a Government Permit for the first public Buddhist lecture series, which was held at Ming Yuen, a hall in the North Point district of Hong Kong.

Sir Shouson's concubine and constant nurse/companion (his first wife had died and his second was in poor health) was also a devout Buddhist and hence a co-religionist of Mamma's.

People who held responsible governmental positions in the Republic of China also thought highly of Mamma, and many exchanged letters of greetings with her annually. One of these was Mr. Liang Shi-yi, a good Chinese scholar who served both as Minister of Finance and as Prime Minister in the Peking government. He also had a home in Hong Kong, where part of his family lived. Mr. Liang's father—an old man—kept a strong and effective hold on the combined families, which filled two large houses standing back to back, one facing Robinson Road and the other Conduit Road, in one of the more expensive residential areas of Hong Kong island. The Mr. Liang of Peking and Hong Kong had a wife and six concubines. His first concubine was Mamma's special friend and also a Buddhist. Mr. Liang introduced to Mamma a scholar-cousin of his, who became our second tutor.

One day Mamma took us to call on Mr. Liang hoping that he might give us some good advice. The gist of his counsel was that it would do us no harm to work hard at our studies. He reminisced that his father had engaged private tutors under whom he studied at home, and to make sure that these studies would not be interrupted even when the tutor went back to his village for the Lunar New Year holidays, his father employed a substitute. The only real holidays he and his fellow-students could look forward to, he said, were a few days around the Ching Ming Festival when all the male members of the family would visit the ancestral graves near the Liang's native village.

Mamma very much admired the brilliant scholarship, both in English and in Chinese, of the Hon. Sir Robert Kotewall, Kt., L.L.D., a well-known Eurasian. Sir Robert served the Hong Kong Government for several decades, first as a Government civil servant and for a number of years starting in 1932 as a member of the Executive Council. Mamma frequently visited the Kotewall home and sought Sir Robert's advice on buying English books for our private library. We once went with her and were captivated by the dramatic way he told us the legend of the female ghost who used to haunt the Goose Neck Bridge over the canal in Causeway Bay, Hong Kong. The Kotewall family later donated Sir Robert's valuable collection of books to the then new Public Library of Hong Kong, where a bust of Sir Robert commemorates the donation.



## THE ENVIRONMENT

When Mamma married, Father and his first wife were living at No.1, Seymour Road, and she joined them. Victoria was born there. At the turn of the century this was a highly regarded residential district, with many handsome western style houses, each with its own garden.

A couple of years later, Father acquired a house at the other end of Seymour Road, No.8, known as "Idlewild." It had always been painted red and to many Chinese it was known as the "Red House." It was to be the Ho family "town house" for six decades, until more than a dozen years after Father died there in 1956.

Idlewild was a large, well-known house, with an excellent view of the harbour and with gardens on several levels linked to each other by flights of steps and pathways, two cement tennis courts (which were partly used as a nursery for plants instead of for tennis), and a large vegetable patch on the highest level. Several of the older Ho Tung children were born in Idlewild.

Many happy events occurred there including the weddings of Victoria, Robbie, and Jean. There Father celebrated his sixtieth, seventieth, and ninetieth birthdays. In 1920 he commemorated his Silver Wedding Anniversary with Mamma and in 1931 his Golden Wedding Anniversary with Mother. For some of these celebrations, mat-sheds<sup>7</sup> were set up in

<sup>7</sup> A *mat-shed* is a temporary structure built of bamboo, wood and palm leaves, tied together with thin strips of bamboo bark wound round the joints. It is put up very quickly and taken down again easily.

various parts of the garden; an archway was always erected at the front entrance to the house. Over this would be placed a big placard, fashioned from fresh flowers in the form of an appropriate inscription in Chinese characters. Idlewild, sadly, was also the scene of several funerals, including Father's in 1956 and Eddie's only fifteen months later.

During Mamma's lifetime, and we continued the practice until the Second World War broke out, we went to Idlewild to celebrate Lunar New Year's Day and again the next day, (with much special food) to "Open the Year." We also went there to celebrate the Dragon Boat Festival, the Moon Festival, and the Winter Solstice Festival, but on these occasions only for the mid-day meal for the first and the evening meal for the other two.

On the anniversaries of the births and deaths of our ancestors various descendents of the deceased gathered there for the evening meal.

In Chinese style, we sat at large round tables, eight to twelve at each table. Sometimes a caterer was hired and the food cooked in the courtyard (between the front and back portions of the house). It was interesting to get occasional glimpses of the caterer's employees cooking in large "woks" which are frying pans with rounded bottoms specially suitable for Chinese cooking. We didn't see much of the cooking because we were kept busy on these occasions and, besides, it was considered in bad taste for daughters of the house to watch these men at work. After the Second World War, such family gatherings took place less frequently and were much reduced in size.

On December 8th 1941, as soon as the war started, the Hong Kong Government took over our home on the Peak and assigned us other accommodation. (Eddie and his four children had come from Shanghai, where his wife remained, to attend Father's and Mother's Diamond Wedding Anniversary and their "Joint Eightieth Birthday" and were staying with us on the Peak). A few days after the outbreak of the war he and his secretary were out trying to get food ration tickets for our group. A bomb fell on the road near them. He received more than a hundred wounds and eventually lost both legs. His secretary died in the hospital that night. The following day a corner of the duplex in which the Government had billeted us was hit and we evacuated for Idlewild.

As our group left the duplex, some prayed to Holy Mary, others to Jesus Christ, and my amah to the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy. I had a large portrait of Mamma with me, so I told the children, "Never mind,

Grandma is watching over all of you.”

Soon after Hong Kong was occupied in December 1941, the Japanese commandeered practically all of Idlewild, filled it with their military personnel and, oddly, conducted a memorial service for their dead in it. For this ceremony, the body of the highest ranking officer among the dead was brought into the dining room while the bodies of the other soldiers and officers lay outside in trucks parked in the driveway.

Mamma having died in 1938, the assembled family, during the Battle of Hong Kong, consisted of Mother and several of the children and grandchildren. Father had gone to Macao where he remained for the rest of the war. We took shelter from bombing in the basement, with a bed for Mother while the rest slept on the floor. When the Japanese came to “borrow” the house, they tried to get us to move out, but we persuaded them that there was nowhere for us to go.

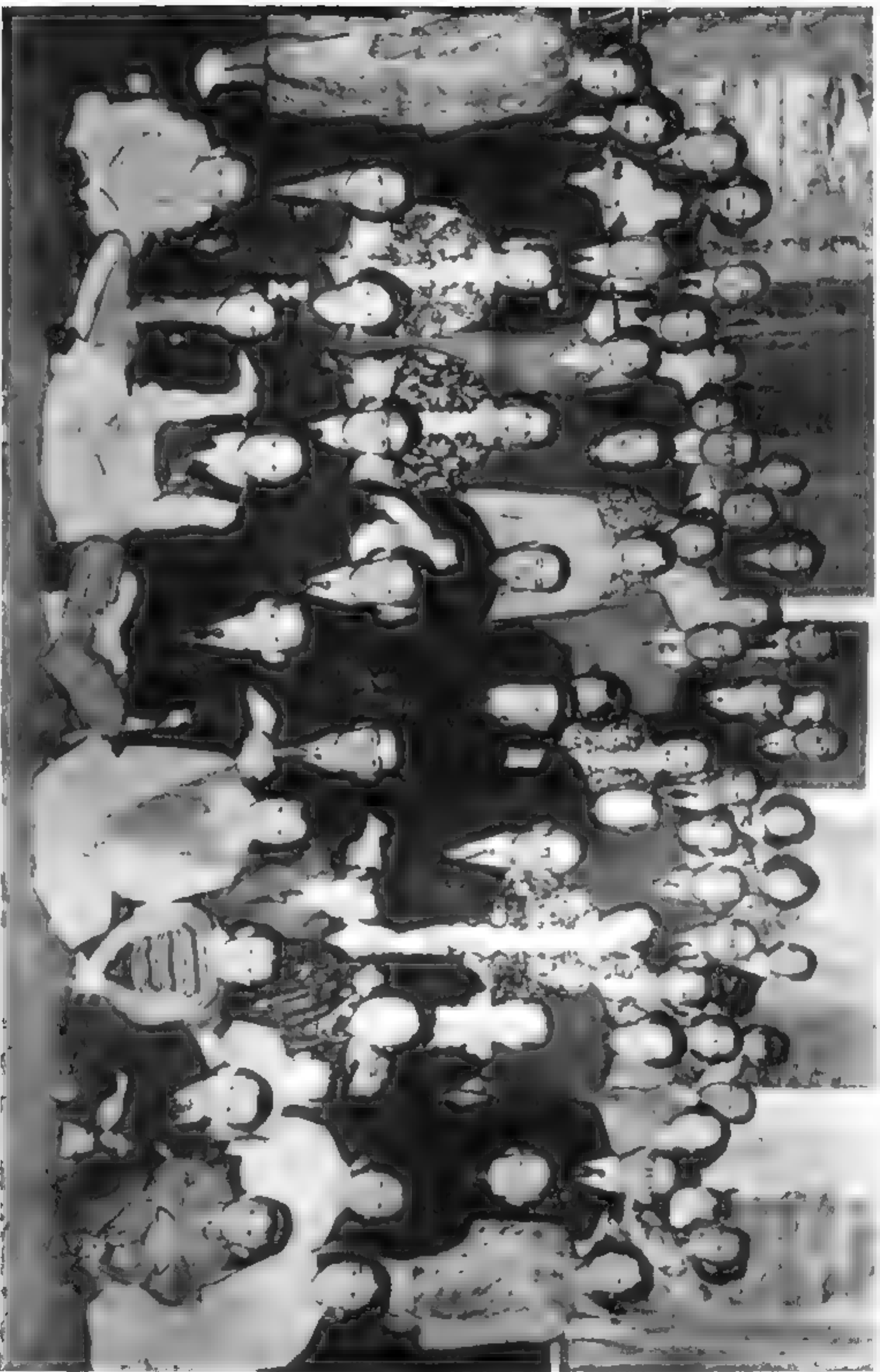
The Japanese soldiers occupying Idlewild could see the women servants walking along the corridor of their own quarters, which were on the opposite side of the inner courtyard. Some of the servants were young and rather attractive and the General asked if they were “available.” Horrified, Mother quickly arranged for the young girls to stay near her for whatever protection she could provide.

The occupiers stayed on for many weeks and when they finally left the house was filthy—the water system of the Colony having been damaged by bombing, and soldiers anywhere not being the cleanest of inhabitants in requisitioned or occupied housing.

Idlewild no longer exists. It was sold by the grandson who inherited it, and has been re-developed. This was probably inevitable as it was on a large and valuable site; the apartment house which replaced it contains more than a hundred flats. Father stipulated in his Will that all those who were staying in the house at the time of his death were to be allowed to remain there for five more years, that is, until 1961.

Among its special features, Mamma and I particularly liked two little stained glass windows set in the large teakwood doors at the main entrance. One window depicted a scene in Scotland and the other, one in Italy. They were both lovely. The teakwood doors themselves, the stained glass windows, two sliding doors with large mirrors front and back that used to divide the dining and sitting rooms, as well as some other mementoes, have been incorporated into a new house built by Joseph Hotung, the grandson who inherited Idlewild.

The houses Father bought on Victoria Peak in 1906 were named



*Father's 90th birthday, 22nd December, 1952*

"The Chalêt" and "Dunford" (situated below Mount Kellet Road, with which they were connected by a wide, steep, winding path directly opposite the old Naval Hospital) and "The Neuk," which was close by on the Aberdeen Road. Each house had five main rooms—three bedrooms (with two or three bathrooms), a living room and a dining room. "The Chalêt" and "Dunford" were joined to each other by two tennis courts, one of which was never used as such because no provision had been made to fence it off from the steep hillside below. The other court was of cement, and many of us tried to learn to play tennis there. I for one never succeeded.

The unfenced or lower court was used as a lawn, and I shall always remember one incident which happened there. It must have been about 1910, when late one evening our houseboy "Chan Ah-bun" was returning from the Neuk. As he walked across the lower tennis court he came across what he thought was a pole carelessly left there. Fortunately he was carrying a lantern and had a terrible fright when he saw that it was a python, not a pole.

He hurried to inform P'aw P'aw, our maternal grandmother. She told him to get the chair bearers out of bed right away and catch the snake. One of the bearers was so scared that he pulled the bed-clothes over his head and refused to help. The others were braver and managed well enough without him. One held a rope lasso while another gently tapped the snake's tail with a bamboo pole. The python immediately raised its head and was caught by the lasso. Somehow, the men got the snake to the upper tennis court and tied it to the leg of one of the iron garden benches.

I still remember waking up the next morning and seeing the huge reptile crawling around the cement court dragging the garden bench behind it! Later in the day Father, who was then bed-ridden, wanted to see it. It was put into a large zinc bathtub and brought to the verandah outside his bedroom at the Neuk.

The chair bearers had hoped that they could have the snake for a feast, and pleaded to be at least allowed to have the gall bladder, which is supposed to have great medicinal value. Father, however, wanted to present the snake in an undamaged condition to the Hong Kong Museum. Instead, he gave the chair bearers money to go to a snake shop. The python was mounted and put on display in the old City Museum.

Mamma, as I have said, was very fond of animals, and over the years we kept a large variety of them. She often talked of the two horses which they had at Idlewild to draw the family carriage and of a



*Father and Lady Margaret at their Diamond Wedding, 2nd December, 1941*

few deer which were kept in a small fenced enclosure on the other side of Seymour Road below Idlewild, as the result of which the plot of ground was called, in Chinese, "the land for the little deer." I well remember the dairy cows (I believe they were Jerseys) kept in wooden sheds on a hill behind Idlewild. As children we used to love to walk up the hill to look at the cows, especially when one of them had had a calf. Some of the milk was brought up the Peak daily for our use.

In the Peak houses there were always dogs and cats which were almost like members of the family. Some of them belonged to us individually, others were just communal property. We also had, at different times, canaries, parrots, two donkeys, two goats, rabbits, guinea pigs, monkeys, an orang-utan, a chimpanzee, a huge tortoise, and other animals I may have forgotten. Many were presents from friends. The donkeys were bought for my younger siblings after we had thoroughly enjoyed riding donkeys during a summer vacation in North China.

There was a story concerning our tortoise that had supernatural overtones. Mamma dreamt one night of a crippled old woman who pleaded with her to save her life. The next day a man brought a huge tortoise to us saying that he had originally intended to sell it for its meat but that he had been told that Lady Clara Ho Tung was a very kindhearted buddhist and often bought animals to save them from a premature death and, if possible, to set them free. Mamma, of course, bought it and the tortoise remained with our family for many years. At the outbreak of the Pacific War, it was evacuated with us from the Peak to Idlewild. Later the tortoise was taken to the Tung Lin Kok Yuen temple and kept there. It finally died but a successor can still be found in the front garden of the Yuen.

For many years, from about 1922, we kept bees at the Peak, in modern hives placed on the unused tennis court. I believe the first bees swarmed nearby and were caught by some of the servants. When we were at the University, Mr. Alfred Morris, the Headmaster of King's College, used to come up on Saturday afternoons to teach us how to keep bees. He really loved them and instilled in Eva and me a deep interest in them. We read books about bee-keeping and ordered special equipment for several hives from England. Unfortunately there were neither enough fruit trees nor flower blossoms to provide sufficient nectar for the bees, and the typhoon winds were very destructive to what little there was.

I think it was in the Summer of 1923, on the Festival of the Seven Sisters that a great typhoon caused havoc in our garden. In

preparing for the typhoon the servants had put slabs of granite on top of the sloping roofs of the beehives, but the typhoon pushed the rocks down and was in the process of lifting the roofs, and even sections, of the hives, so we rushed out to save the bees. We intended to move the hives into the basement under Dunford.

A violent gust of wind threw us to our knees; when we got up we were surprised to see that the wind had bent the wrought iron poles of the upper tennis court fence, folded down the wire netting and swept the heavy wood and iron garden bench from the upper to the lower court where it landed within a few feet of us.

It was just luck that we were not hurt, and some of the older women servants, watching from a window, shouted to us to give up trying to save the bees. Reluctantly we decided it would be unwise not to follow their advice. The hives were very much damaged, and the numbers of bees substantially reduced.

Although there were two houses, The Chalêt and Dunford, to accommodate us, we were so numerous that as we grew up there was still not enough room. Each house, as I said, had three bedrooms, and the verandahs had been enclosed to provide extra space. However, the weather in Hong Kong, particularly on the Peak, was often terribly humid (even if cooler than in town) during the summer months—frequently very foggy and near the saturation point for days on end. The dining and sitting rooms in The Chalêt were used only when we had guests and a third room had to be used as a heated box-room to keep clothes (and other valuables that might mildew) dry. In Dunford, a billiard table occupied what would have been the sitting room. Fortunately, the dining room was available for family meals.

Some years after we moved to the Peak, Father bought a large tract of land there, now known as the "Homestead" site. He finally decided to build a house on it, but when the plans were submitted to the Public Works Department, it negotiated with him an exchange of that site for one in town, which though considerably smaller, was very valuable.

Father built the Ho Tung Building there, with Chinese shops on the ground floor and living accommodation above, while on the Homestead site, Government built a block of six large flats for senior Government officials, and several two-storeyed houses for very senior officers. Consequently, Mamma had to remain for many more years in cramped accommodation with her large family. By the time another site on the Peak was found, called "The Falls," many members of our family had

left—either having married or gone abroad to study. When the new house was finally built, Mamma was often the only occupant of the family nest. The Chalêt and Dunford were eventually sold and The Neuk retained as Father's residence on the Peak until World War II. Dr. K.C. Yeo, who later married my youngest sister, Florence, stayed with Mamma during some of the years between 1928 and 1933, when he was a Health Officer in the Medical Department. During the summer, various grandchildren and their parents stayed with her and the house filled with life and activity.

The Falls had originally been given that name because a mountain stream flowed nearby. In the rainy season there actually was a waterfall there. Some of the water was used to fill a swimming pool, and this was no doubt one of its main attractions for my parents. Messrs. Palmer and Turner, the leading architects in those days, drew the plans for the house; Mamma took a great interest in the project and made numerous suggestions that were used by the architects. When she accompanied Eva and me to London in 1927, she took the plans with her and arranged for the General Electric Company to supply many of the electrical fittings, including a number of beautiful chandeliers. The central hall of the house was decorated and furnished as a Chinese reception room, with blackwood furniture and an impressive carved blackwood screen. Framed in the panels of this screen were several scrolls written on special red paper, in excellent calligraphy, eulogizing Father's many contributions to society. The scrolls had been presented to him by a number of his friends on his sixtieth birthday.

It was a beautiful house. The floors were parquettèd in teak and the downstairs walls panelled in the same wood. An exquisite wrought iron banister framed the wide staircase, and there were marble slabs in various places. It had nine bedrooms and half a dozen bathrooms. The inevitable box-rooms (there were two of them) were placed between the upper and lower floors at the back, above the large kitchen. The women servants' quarters were in the basement, which had windows facing down the hillside and overlooking the fishing village of Aberdeen. Other living quarters (above the garage) housed the men servants. Over the covered driveway entrance there was a large airy bedroom with windows on three sides, complete with bathroom and kitchenette. This suite of rooms Mamma, because of her intense interest in nursing, planned as a sick room or convalescent room.

Above the sick room was Mamma's family shrine, with an altar-piece in the centre, designed so that her Buddhist deities were on one



*The Pagoda at "The Falls"*

side and her ancestral tablets on the other. Just outside the shrine were two little rooms Mamma used for meditation.

When her brother went to North China, Mamma persuaded Father to let her bring the ancestral tablets of the Cheung family to our home, for she felt it was her duty to care for them while her brother was away.

The Falls received several direct hits during the war, one bomb landing on the roof of Mamma's shrine, another on her bedroom (which made it look like an open verandah) and several elsewhere in the house and on the grounds. It was a painful sight when I went there soon after Hong Kong had surrendered to the Japanese, one which was not improved by the dead Army mules that had been dumped into the dry swimming pool. My precious books and the loose pages of my Ph.D. thesis were scattered everywhere. I have kept one of the books that suffered this bombing as a special souvenir of the havoc. A piece of shrapnel had gone in at the spine of the book and come out through the back cover, so that every page was slightly damaged. It was indeed merciful that Mamma was spared the sight of such damage to the house on which she had spent so much time and energy.

Mamma was very fond of flowers and fresh vegetables. In Hong Kong during her lifetime, few ladies in her position did any gardening themselves, but she took a keen interest in the gardens and often walked through them, admiring the work here, giving some instructions there, so that the gardeners would be encouraged. The results were the best that could be expected under the peculiar climatic conditions prevailing on the Peak. We participated in the annual Horticultural Show during the years it was held—Idlewild with its exhibits, in the name of "Lady Ho Tung," in the town section; and our garden's exhibits in the Peak section, in the name of Sir Robert Ho Tung.

When Mamma moved to the new house, the land around it was still wild, and she had terraces built leading down to the swimming pool and the waterfall, where she erected a little pavilion. Here it was always cool, calm, and quiet, except for the sound of the falling water. She was very fond of this spot, and on the pillars of the pavilion installed mouldings containing poems and poetic couplets written for her by friends who were both good poets and calligraphers. Her brother, who had come back from North China, lived in the house and supervised the gardeners and workmen in accordance with her instructions. He remained with her for the last decade or so of her life.

Mamma seldom stayed in Idlewild, except on special occasions, after we moved to the Peak in 1906. But for many years she still had



*Distant view of "The Falls," June 1954*



*The Moon Gate at "The Falls"*

reserved for her there a spacious suite of rooms overlooking the harbour and connected with Father's room by a wide verandah. When Robbie was married, our parents let the newly-weds have Mamma's suite and more modest quarters were reserved for her instead. Mother, of course, lived in Idlewild and had her own large suite, also overlooking the harbour on one side and the garden on another.

Mamma had full sovereignty over the two houses at the Peak in which we grew up, and later over The Falls. Although the new house had a room earmarked for Father, I do not think he ever used it except for the days between Mamma's last illness and her funeral when he wanted to be near her and the rest of the family.

For many westerners it may not be easy to imagine a situation in which a man had two wives and a concubine alive at the same time, all getting on amicably with one another, including the children born of different mothers. Yet to us this seemed quite natural. Mamma brought us up to have great respect for our elders, an attitude that was reinforced by principles learnt from "The Old Master," our Chinese teacher, whom I shall describe more fully later. Mary's sick mother (Father's concubine) lived separately in a house in Caine Road, but I remember her being carried up the stairs in Idlewild to join us for lunch on Festival days. When she passed away without a male child, Mamma had Robbie take the part of her son at the funeral, which we all attended. I remember being very frightened for it was the first funeral I had ever attended. Father was very ill at the time and was not told of her death. He was informed of it several years later when his health permitted, and had a special memorial elegy written for him to read at her graveside, and then to burn as an offering to her.

In addition to Idlewild and the Peak houses, Father also had residences outside Hong Kong. In Macao, he owned No. 25, Praya Grande, which immediately faced the Pacific Ocean and was very pleasant. We visited the house for short holidays during our early childhood. Later, the Macao house was at No. 3 Largo Sto Agostinho. During the Second World War, Father lived in this house for several years.

He also bought a large house in Shanghai during the 1920's. I well remember that on earlier visits to Shanghai, in accordance with Chinese custom, we all crowded into the house of Mamma's cousin in Tsan Hsin Lane.

Father's Shanghai house, oddly enough, was on a street also called Seymour Road. It had several spacious bedrooms upstairs, large reception rooms downstairs, and a beautiful marble staircase. There was a

large lawn, and vegetable patches at the back. I stayed there often when stopping in Shanghai. Eventually, Eddie and his family lived there. It was, of course, convenient for my parents to have a home of their own in Shanghai when they visited there, as they were both fond of doing. Mother, however, very seldom went to China, though she often accompanied Father on trips to England. In due course, Father also bought a house in the beach resort of Tsingtao, but quite often it was rented out and I never saw it. Both Father and Mamma liked Tsingtao; its climate and environment were very good indeed. I particularly remember its lovely large beach, its fine sand and the pretty houses with red roofs, originally built by the Germans when Tsingtao was a German Colony.

Lastly, there was a house in England at 18, Mortlake Road, Kew Gardens, Surrey, which Mamma never saw. Many of its bedrooms had bathrooms attached—a rarity for houses in England then, and one of its chief attractions when Father bought it about 1932. The house stood in large grounds which included a lawn in the front, with roses, a mulberry tree and flower-beds; and a tennis court, garage, vegetable gardens, and a hothouse in the back.

When he bought the house, Father intended to visit London every year or so. As it turned out he didn't visit London that often and the house was empty much of the time. I lived there when I was working on my Ph.D. thesis.

A set of paintings of early Hong Kong, Macao, Canton, and Shanghai (which he intended to present to China, because of their historic value) hung on the walls of the house in Kew Gardens. During the War, the pictures were stored in London. Later, Father brought them back to Hong Kong and donated them to the Museum in the new City Hall, which displays them from time to time under the name of the Ho Tung Collection. The house at Kew Gardens, because its land only had a twenty-five-year lease, was later sold and became a Nursing Home, for which it was well suited. In 1968, when my sister Grace and I went to have another look at it, we found the building being demolished. There is now a school on the site.

Father and Mamma were very fond of the sea and since she was anxious that we should all learn to swim, Father acquired several boats. The first, the "Plover," had three masts but the wind was seldom right for her to sail and her auxiliary engine was not of much use for it was frequently out of order. So my parents sold it and had a motor yacht built to Mamma's specifications. They called it the "Fook Po" (literally

meaning "conquering the waves") which is the name of an important general in Chinese history. It was large and well equipped and we spent many happy days on it.

Later, Father bought still another boat, the "Clara," mainly for his own use. He anchored it near the waterfront, within walking distance of his office, and would have his mid-day meal on it, and rest there afterwards. For some of those who wanted to see him, meetings were arranged there during the afternoon. Those who were bad sailors found this an ordeal as the boat rocked with the swells created by passing steamers.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, both the "Fook Po" and the "Clara" were commandeered by the Hong Kong Government, and, I believe, were among those scuttled to prevent Japanese gunboats from entering the harbour. It was a pitiful as well as useless end for these boats since the Japanese came instead by land and by air.

In spite of having such excellent surroundings in which to grow up, we were by no means reared in luxury. Mamma always encouraged us to have simple tastes, and brought us up frugally. She explained that if some day we were not able to live affluently, we would not feel the difference so much if we had not become accustomed to luxuries. She often quoted a famous Chinese saying which means, roughly, "In running our household we should be economical; when we entertain friends there should be plenty. If we do not economise, how are we to end our days?"

At the turn of the century, Father had been asked by one of his western friends to purchase some land for him in the Sheung Shui area of Hong Kong's New Territories, but the friend changed his mind and Father took over the land instead. It was rather inaccessible until the British section of the Kowloon-Canton Railway was built in 1910. Soon after that Mother decided to make it into a farm so that our family would have a place to go for weekends or outings.

The farm was called "Tung Ying Hok P'o." On it, Mother created a building complex in which were incorporated some of the characteristics of Chinese farm buildings.

There was a wide circular driveway leading from the main road to the farm compound, with a round lotus pond in the centre. There were actually two buildings inside the rectangular compound, joined at either end by a wall, with a courtyard in the centre, where there was another lotus pond with gold fish as well. In one building there were the kitchen, rooms for the farmhands to eat their meals, and sometimes

live, and storage space for farm tools and equipment. Part of the other building was also used for various farm activities.

In the centre of this second building were two sitting rooms, a Chinese and a western one. Above there were three bedrooms and two bathrooms. When we started the farm, electric power had not yet reached that area, so we had our own power generator so that there could be electric lights, running water for the house and farm and such modern amenities as electric fans, heaters and electric stoves. The cooking, however, was done with firewood or charcoal.

I still remember many happy times spent on the farm. On one occasion Mother was advised to plant peanuts during fallow seasons so that the land would be enriched. At harvest time her embroidery and sewing amah, Luk Goo, machine-stitched a number of calico bags, so that we each had one. Mother told us that we could go into the field where the peanuts had been ploughed up (and the main crop already harvested) and whatever we gathered we could keep. It was great fun.

We loved to watch the modern piggery, where a cement trough had been built for the pigs to bathe in—and how they enjoyed it! There were also several fish ponds.

Mother tried growing a large variety of fruit trees in an orchard surrounding the farm compound, and a few decades ago there were some very good li-chee trees there. (Li-chees are *not* “nuts,” although the sun-dried fruits may look like such and that is the name by which, incorrectly, they are known in the United States.) I remember that during one of the years I was lecturing at Lingnan University in Canton I could not come to Hong Kong in time for the general harvesting of the li-chee trees. Mother promised to keep one unharvested until I could get there. So as soon as I could leave Lingnan for the year’s summer holiday, I took the train to Sheung Shui and went directly to our farm. I can still visualize that beautiful large tree heavily laden with dark, red, ripe fruit. We took a bucket of cool well water to the tree and as we picked the fruit we soaked it for a little while in the cool water, and then peeled and ate each li-chee. It is one of the world’s most delicious fruits.

Mother also experimented with crops other than rice and fruit trees. At one time, she grew sugar cane and had a machine in the compound to press it and make slabs of brown sugar; she also tried to grow tobacco and had another press which bundled the tobacco leaves. On the slopes of a little hillock several kinds of tea were planted; but her most interesting experiment was the rearing of silkworms and the growing of small-sized mulberry trees, the leaves of which could be

picked while one stood on the ground.

Many Chinese children have reared silkworms as a hobby, but on the farm it was done on a large, professional scale. Experts were brought out from Shun Tak district which was famous for its silk production; and sheets of silkworm eggs were obtained either from the Department of Sericulture of Lingnan University or from Shun Tak. One room had tiers upon tiers of racks on which were placed the large round rattan trays in which the worms lived. They passed through their life cycle quickly, growing from the thickness of a human hair and about an eighth of an inch long to two-and-a-half or three inches long and the width of a woman's little finger or even larger. As they neared the adult stage they ate voraciously, and it was said that if they were not then fed regularly their silk would break rather than come out in a complete thread, a development, of course, to be avoided. Mother, therefore, was usually at the farm at such times. I remember her standing on the balcony of her bedroom very early in the morning and calling out in a loud voice to make sure that the workmen got up to feed the silkworms.

In 1924 Father went as a Commissioner of one of the Sections at the Wembley Exhibition and Mother, at the request of the Hong Kong Government, took a group of her silk workers to London to demonstrate this industry at the Exhibition.



*The P'ai Lou at "The Falls"*



## THE DOMESTIC STAFF AND SOME FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Readers used to the western way of life in the 1970's may find it difficult to imagine life in China or in Hong Kong at the end of the nineteenth and during the early decades of the twentieth century. In Hong Kong, for instance, running water (cold only) was to be found primarily in wealthier homes, and not in all of them. There was, of course, no central heating or air conditioning, nor were there many labour-saving devices. Cooking was done over firewood and charcoal, though a few families used kerosene stoves. Even now, in the early nineteen-seventies, many Hong Kong households still use firewood and charcoal. Everything was done by hand or with human labour in some form. The wife and mother of even a modestly well-to-do family did not try to do the cooking, the cleaning, the washing, to care for the children, and to handle the other domestic duties by herself.

Instead, a Chinese upper or middle class family included one or more amahs (a Portugese word that came to the Orient via India, and originally meant a wet-nurse; now it means any female domestic servant). The wealthier families might also have men-servants, performing duties such as those of an English valet, butler, footman, house-boy, or gardener as well as sedan-chair bearers or rickshaw pullers. The number of servants depended on economic status and family size, on the type of living quarters to be managed and their distance from the centre of town and from the market. The wife and mother devoted much of her time to the care of her husband and her children, and carried out social responsibilities vis-a-vis relatives and friends, of whom the Chinese

seemed to have many and with whom they always tried to maintain an active relationship. There seemed to be plenty of time for leisure, at least among the more affluent, and life was not so rushed. The servants appeared satisfied to have occupations in which they could succeed and seemed proud of their achievements, however menial. To be a servant was a respected and respectable occupation. Once a servant joined a family, he or she would often become closely attached to it, remaining frequently for several decades. Such servants were practically regarded as members of the family. Most employers took a paternal interest in them, and often in their families as well, endeavouring to help them in every way possible.

There were no employment agencies and most domestic servants were recommended by those serving a given family or the families of relatives or friends. Servants would, from time to time, ask for leave to go home to their villages. Sometimes a servant would inform Mamma that his (or her) mother was ill, or relate some other "hard luck story." He might ask Mamma for a small financial loan which she generally granted. The loan, always interest-free, would be entered in our account book. After returning to work, he (or she) would be consulted each month, until the loan was repaid, as to the size of the deduction, if any, to be made from salary. Repayment was sometimes spread over two or three years.

Quite often when a servant came back from the village, Mamma would be told of a relative who was having a hard time and asked to give or get the relative a job. Occasionally the returning servant would simply bring the relative back with him, confident that Mamma would help out by finding employment for the unfortunate person. More often than not Mamma would create a new post in our household to meet the situation. As many of the new servants came straight from a village, they seldom had skills of use in an urban household, but in a large one such as ours they could start by assisting and learning from those who had such skills. As they became proficient, they occasionally found better paid jobs elsewhere and left us; hence we, as did other families, sometimes served as a "training centre" for those just out of the village. During Mamma's lifetime, we usually had a fairly large staff, with a core of old timers and others who were relatively new.

In traditional Chinese households the family and its servants often prepared most of the food needed for special occasions instead of buying it already prepared. Frequently, there was a semi-religious or at least supernatural, significance to the preparation itself, as it was supposed to

bring good luck for the subsequent year. The main occasions for such activities were the Lunar New Year (see Appendix A on the Lunar Calendar); the Dragon Boat Festival, which comes on the fifth day of the fifth moon; the Moon Festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth moon; and the Winter Solstice, which falls on December 22nd or 23rd.

Because shops and markets were closed for the first few days of the Lunar New Year, each family prepared great quantities of food, especially that which would not quickly spoil and could be served to the many who would come to bring greetings. Some of the prepared food would also be sent to relatives and friends before the New Year to convey the family's good wishes.

One special type of food prepared for such occasions, especially for the Lunar New Year, was fried in huge woks in deep peanut oil. The first helpings produced are offered to the ancestors at the family shrine. Once a family has started this practice, it must do it every year, except when the family has suffered a death, when the practice is discontinued for the customary three years of mourning. Many of the foods involved are described in the chapter on Mamma's religious activities as they are brought to the cemetery and offered to the ancestors at family graves.

For instance, families might make "chin dui" which are pastry balls of different sizes with various fillings—such as, coconut strips, peanuts, and popped but uncooked rice, all mixed with brown sugar—rolled in sesame seeds. Most families would offer "chin dui" at the family shrine even if they had to buy them. They would also prepare "turn-over" shaped packets, the outside made of mashed sweet potatoes mixed with flour and sugar, with the inside generally a filling of black pea purée. These are fried in deep peanut oil and the cook's technique is put to the test in ensuring that the "packets" do not burst open in the process.

Other foods similarly fried are peanuts, broad beans, and small diagonally shaped slices of sweet potatoes, yams, or arrowhead. Alternatively yam strips are stuck together into small lumps called "yam shrimps" and then fried. They are considered good omens because their name sounds like the Chinese word meaning "to protect."

In addition to the fried foodstuffs, many families also made large steamed puddings of sweetened rice flour poured into a mould, layer by layer, leaving time for each to set before the next layer was poured in. There would be at least nine layers, hence the name nine-layered pudding, "gau ch'ung go." Nine, being considered the representative of the "yang," the male or positive principle in nature, is to the Chinese a

propitious number. Other such puddings were not sweet and had ground-up taro or turnips as their base, with miscellaneous ingredients such as dried shrimps or pork, fresh, barbecued or salted, added for flavour.

Some time during the last fortnight of the old year, a propitious date was selected by consulting the *Almanac*, in order to give thanks to the Supernatural for the blessings received during the outgoing year. Special good dishes were prepared to be offered at the family shrine, both to the deities and to the ancestors; and the family and household staff also had better food that evening. We had one such "thanksgiving meal" each year at Idlewild and on another propitious evening had one at the Peak.

In many traditional Chinese families, the twenty-third day of the twelfth moon is another religious year-end date to be observed. On that date, according to popular belief, based on some old writings rather than that of Buddhism or other religions, the "Kitchen God" is supposed to return to Heaven to make his report about the family he has observed from his shrine in or near the kitchen. The family gives him a feast to ensure that he will make a good report. Needless to say, not all Chinese really believe this. Partly to satisfy the servants who do believe it, however, we too had a shrine for the "Kitchen God" at Idlewild, with a paper image procured fresh each year from the shop selling such things for religious purposes, and special food on the night of the 23rd day of the twelfth moon. On the other hand, we did not have such a shrine on the Peak as evidently Mamma regarded this legend as folk religion and not in line with her Buddhist beliefs.

On Lunar New Year's Eve, after all the preparations for the celebration have been completed, the members of a Chinese family join together for a "year-end united gathering" called "t'uan nien." A congenial family spirit reigns, as at a Thanksgiving dinner in the United States, combined with an atmosphere of happy anticipation of even better things to come in the new year, which starts the next day.

When we were children, we had two such family reunions annually, the first one two nights before the Lunar New Year, when even our adopted Brother Ho Wing and his family would join us for the meal at Idlewild. The following night there was another at our Peak home. As the Lunar New Year's Eve is also the anniversary of the death of Mamma's mother, we were joined for that meal by Mother and our cousins Maggie and Lily Cheung.

In many traditional families this "t'uan nien" meal was actually the precursor of the New Year celebrations, as 11 p.m. was the begin-

ning of the first two-hourly time period of the Lunar New Year's Day. At that hour such families often paid their respects to the Supernatural and to their ancestors.

Frequently the younger people, in proper order of seniority, immediately afterwards (or the next morning) paid their respects to their own elders—by kowtowing, as we did to our parents, uncles and aunts and to our Chinese teachers, when we were young, or by simply bowing and “shaking our own hands” once, males raising their joined hands to the level of the forehead and females bending their bodies and lowering their joined hands towards their knees. After the children and grandchildren had paid their respects in this way, the servants of the household did likewise. We also verbally or by “shaking our own hands” less formally, exchanged New Year greetings with the servants, most of whom, especially the married ones, gave us “lucky money” packets wrapped in red paper, containing a penny or perhaps a dime. Of course, our parents gave “lucky money” packets to all of us including the staff in our home and the office, and the children and servants in the homes of relatives and friends who were visited during the New Year period.

On Lunar New Year's Day, if Father was in good health, he would name an hour or so when he would be “at home” to receive callers—often this started at 11 a.m.—and our home would then be full of relatives and friends and their children. Many of them took this opportunity to see and greet each other and pass out the obligatory red packets, of whatever value. Many of these people we only saw once a year on that day.

On Lunar New Year's Day, and sometimes for several days afterwards, families go calling on relatives, friends and senior colleagues. Some would have already sent by special messenger, before the Lunar New Year, presents including fried foods such as the “chin dui” and, especially in more recent years, perhaps a basket of fruit and wine, depending on the closeness of the relationship or on the extent of gratitude for past favours. Regardless of whether such presents are sent, it is a necessary social obligation to convey New Year greetings in person, and there are unwritten rules as to who makes the first call and when it should be made. The older members of a family normally do not go out on the first, and perhaps even not on the second, day of the New Year, except perhaps to call on someone very special, as custom decrees they should stay at home to receive callers. Later they return the calls themselves or send a more junior member of their family to represent them.

Sometimes the visits are very brief, as the visitors have a number of families to see each half day; nonetheless they are at least served plain tea or "lotus seed tea." If there is enough time, the sweet or savoury pudding is prepared, fried, and served with tea, often with a plate of "chin dui" or other fried foodstuffs.

During the last few days of the old year there is usually a Fair where all sorts of things are set out for sale, especially flowers and blossoms, such as the peony, the hyacinth, large branches of peach or plum and the "hanging bells" (a flowering tree, found wild on the hill-sides in Hong Kong, which has clustered bunches of red flowers shaped like bells). Most families prepare a box of miscellaneous sugared candies, in which there is a round section in the centre and a number of wedge shaped sections around it. The central one is almost always filled with red watermelon seeds, and the others with a variety of different coloured Chinese sweets: lotus seeds, water chestnuts, coconut strips, sliced lotus roots, plums, peanuts, or kum kwats (a small Chinese fruit of the citrus family), each candied with white sugar and dried. The host offers this box to each visitor with an invitation to "yau ngan" meaning "take some money"—for the word for money and the word for seeds sound alike. Polite visitors usually just take a few red watermelon seeds. A young married woman might be persuaded to have a lotus seed, so that she will produce more sons, or a child might be given the same delicacy because it is easily eaten. Of course, the visitor is free to choose whatever he fancies.

Another activity normally undertaken all over China just before the Lunar New Year is the "spring cleaning." I was fortunate to be in the People's Republic of China in early February, 1973, and was interested to see that the "spring cleaning" and the visiting of relatives and friends are still carried on, though less elaborately and with no obligation to hand out "lucky money" packets.

There had been a heavy snow fall in Peking about ten days before the Lunar New Year or Spring Festival, as it is now called, but most of the snow was swept away soon after it fell. However, during the last two days before the Festival people were again sweeping snow from the streets and when necessary chopping out the ice so that it would not be slippery when the people went around on their visits. This holiday in the People's Republic is four days long, the longest in the year. As it turned out, there was a small snowfall during the night of New Year's Eve, so that when I drove to the airport to fly from Peking to Shanghai on Lunar New Year's Day the snow scenery was beautiful.

That afternoon, after I reached my hotel in Shanghai, I could see families walking along Nanking Road on their way to or from their New Year calls, dressed in multicoloured clothes, quite different from the blues and greys, or greens and blacks that are now usually seen inside China. January 1st replaced the Lunar New Year as the official beginning of the Chinese year more than sixty years ago, but old customs and habits are hard to change.

The Dragon Boat Festival is commonly believed to have originated with the story of the poet-statesman Ch'u Yuan who was so desperately unhappy with the utterly corrupt and inept government he lived under that he committed suicide (in 314 B.C.) by jumping into the Meklo River in Hunan. Tradition has it that the people tried in vain to save him, and threw rice dumplings into the river so that the fish would eat them instead of his body. Ever since it has been customary for Chinese families to celebrate this event with these dumplings. The dumplings are made of glutinous rice, and are either plain or filled with sweetened black bean puree, meat or other ingredients that are not sweet. The dumplings are then wrapped in broad bamboo leaves and tied with string or a kind of grass string which the Chinese are fond of using because it is strong and inexpensive. They are steamed before they are unwrapped and eaten.

The Dragon Boat Festival is usually celebrated at a mid-day meal, and many families serve with the dumplings a pulse congee, cooked with five differently coloured peas and beans, sometimes with a little rice added. In many districts, the villagers organise Dragon Boat Races; in Hong Kong these are important social events, at which the Governor and other high officials distribute banners to the winning teams. In recent years there have been races at Aberdeen and other villages on the island, in the fishing villages of the New Territories and elsewhere. For several years, European enthusiasts have joined in the fun by organising their own boat teams, but so far they have never won.

The Moon Festival as one would expect, is celebrated at night. It is said that the moon is brightest and most beautiful on this particular evening, because it is the birthday of the deity in the moon. The family gathers around to pay homage to the moon deity and to enjoy a feast afterwards. The foodstuffs include, in addition to the traditional moon cake, seasonal fruits such as pomelo, persimmon, and carambola. Originally, this was a harvest festival.

The Winter Solstice (December 22nd) is called in Chinese the Arrival of Winter. It comes so near the Lunar New Year that it almost

begins the season of preparation for this most popular festival. At this time of the year, even in the People's Republic, the Chinese, especially in the North, busy themselves cleaning everything up, paying their debts and planning the preparation of food for the Lunar New Year celebrations.

For the Winter Solstice, the Chinese, among other things, make large steamed puddings of rice flour, the "go." Mandarin oranges, perhaps the best in the world, are in season. They are called "Winter oranges" because they are eaten at this Festival.

Another Chinese Festival is the Seven Sisters' Festival, which falls on the seventh day of the seventh moon. In one version of the story seven fairies who were sisters came down to earth one day and were washing their clothes by a stream. The youngest of them saw and fell in love with a cow herd. The Goddess of the Western Heavens disapproved of this romance. Nevertheless, this seventh fairy bore the cow-herd a son, and gave it to him to bring up. Thereafter, the couple were allowed to meet only once a year, on the evening before the day on which the Festival is celebrated. The blackbirds take pity on the couple, so the story goes, and each year build a bridge across the Milky Way to expedite the meeting.

This romantic bit of folklore was preserved by having the Festival celebrated especially by unmarried girls. There were so many daughters in our family that when we were children we celebrated it in a big way. For instance, since we lived on the Peak we normally dressed in western clothes; but for the celebration of the Seven Sisters Festival we wore pretty Chinese costumes. And we fasted that day; that is, we only had vegetarian dishes. A friend told me that in her family the girls went even further and lived on a vegetarian diet for a whole week and that on the Festival day itself they ate only raw fruits and other uncooked vegetarian foods.

Many shops and families had such elaborate displays for the Festival that these were open to the public. For one or two years, outside visitors came to see our displays too, despite the fact that in those days it was quite a chore, though parts were pleasant, to go to, and then up on the Peak Tram and finally to walk or ride by sedan chair to the Châlet.

When we were young, partly because we lived far away from town and had a large staff as well as a large family to feed, we had two male cooks. The chief cook went to town each evening, and returned the next morning with the day's groceries. The assistant cook undertook

the simpler cooking and all the cleaning-up jobs. We either had a western-style breakfast, with milk and perhaps porridge, eggs, bread and butter and jam, or we might have some "chuk" or "congee" with salted pork boiled in it.

For special occasions the cook used to make "dim sum" (little steamed savoury pastries made of flour with a variety of fillings), which literally means "touching the heart." In other words, their main function is to make people happy. The chief cook made these very well, but as he was a male Mamma insisted that we stay away from the kitchen so we never learned his skill. "Dim sum" is a favourite Hong Kong Cantonese luncheon.

When Mamma was young, the markets in Hong Kong were not places to which a lady went, though it is possible that a few western housewives might have done so, much to the disapproval of those who saw them there.

In the markets were fresh vegetables, which could be selected individually and then weighed by the Chinese stick balance, the ch'ing. There were also eggs, meat (mostly pork), hanging from hooks or lying on a table, from which the shopper buys the piece he wants; chickens (kept alive in basketware coops), the shopper being allowed to feel the fowl and to select the one he or she desires; fish (either alive in fresh water, or just killed lying on a table or on ice); and all the other food-stuffs needed to produce a Chinese meal. The ground was often wet and sometimes muddy, and the smell of fresh fish was not pleasant. There was noisy bargaining and haggling over prices. Moreover, it was not thought proper for females from better class families to rub shoulders with strangers in a crowded market place.

Besides cooking for the household, the next most important job was washing and ironing the clothes and household linen. In the days when there were no helpful machines nor permanent press and wrinkle-free fabrics, many things had to be starched and everything ironed by hand, especially in the humid Hong Kong climate where clothes did not dry easily. Consequently, our large family needed two wash-amahs.

Most families employed one or more amahs to look after the children. Some used wet-nurses to breast-feed their infants, but Mamma only did this on one occasion, and then just for a short while. She breast-fed her children till we were about eight months old. Many families had an amah for each child, but Mamma did not approve of this either. So we had several amahs who, together, looked after us and also did other housework. While we went to school, their duties started

early in the morning, when they saw to it that we got up in time, helped us get dressed, prepared our simple breakfasts, made our beds and cleaned our rooms, swept the floors, and did the tidying up of the entire house.

When we returned home from school we had a simple afternoon tea, and later in the evening ate supper. For our evening baths, because there was no running hot water in either the Chalêt or Dunford, the amahs carried hot water, bucket by bucket, from the boiler in the kitchen to mix with the cold water in our bathtubs.

If we were ill, Mamma personally attended to our nursing, the amahs being allowed at most to assist. But when we were well, it was customary for the amahs to look after our day-to-day needs. If our hair needed washing, the amahs boiled a special tea preparation and washed our hair with it, which presumably made it extra clean.

If they had the chance, the amahs loved to go to a traditional Chinese opera. Sometimes, after work, they played one of a number of games amongst themselves. They particularly liked a game of dominoes called "sky dog," which is a quick and lively Chinese game played with 32 dominoes. It can be played by two, three, or four persons and the rules are simple, so that even a young child can play it. Experts complicate the game in various ways so as to make it much more a game of skill.

Their board and lodging were looked after and they had wages to save or to send home to their families. Many of them made monthly contributions to one of the mutual-aid loan associations known as "woois." Some were unmarried, others might be widows.

There was no motor road which went up to the Peak until the early 1920's. The only way to town other than walking was the Peak Tram. The Tram station on the Peak itself was reached by sedan chair, by rickshaw, or by walking. There were public sedan chairs at the Peak Tram station, and one could telephone to have chairs or rickshaws sent to the house, if they were available. However, for convenience, our family had several chairs and rickshaws of its own and men to handle them. These men were known ethnically, as "Hok-lo" and had come from the seafaring districts of Hai-fung and Lu-fung in Kwang Tung province. Hok-lo people speak a different dialect and are physically taller and more robust than other natives of Kwang Tung province. It is probable that they are of a different racial stock from that normally considered Chinese, namely the Han people. The Hok-lo men in our household were probably all from the same village, one having no doubt

introduced the others to our employment. Many had the same surname, Ng in Cantonese.

An incident concerning a chair bearer showed how Mamma dealt with them. Besides looking after our transportation needs, they also went into town each day to attend to miscellaneous jobs for the household. For instance, they settled our accounts at the rice shop and at other Chinese stores, which we paid in cash every few months immediately prior to the Dragon Boat Festival, the Moon Festival, the Winter Solstice Festival, and the Lunar New Year.

On one of these occasions, a chair bearer, Ah Ding, was supposed to pay a bill of several hundred Hong Kong dollars to the rice shop. That evening he did not return and in due course the shop told us that the bill had not been paid. Mamma paid the bill, and each time one of the other chair bearers returned to their village, Mamma asked him to try to locate Ah Ding and persuade him to return to our employment. I believe it was some time, perhaps several years, before Ah Ding could be persuaded to return. When he finally did come, he told Mamma that his pocket had been picked and that he did not have the courage to come back to face her. There were those, however, who thought he had lost the money gambling. But Mamma forgave him for the incident—whatever the truth might have been—and re-employed Ah Ding at a salary a little higher than that paid to his colleagues so that he could afford a deduction each month and thus, within a couple of years, gradually work off the loss, which had been recorded in our account book as a loan, as if he had applied for one and been granted it. Ah Ding and his colleagues thought this a good arrangement and were grateful to Mamma for thus accommodating him.

Most of the men servants had had a couple of years of schooling and could read and write a little, but the amahs were almost all illiterate, the few exceptions being given more responsible posts and paid higher salaries. For instance, there was one who was surnamed Leung. Because she was the niece of an old lady who was supposed to be Father's "God-mother," we were taught to call her "Second Aunt Leung," or Leung Yee Goo. She was quite a character. She had come from a refined family and so had had bound feet (see Appendix D) which were about five inches long after unbinding; but they had been bound and unbound so competently that they gave her no pain whatsoever. Mamma made her responsible for handling the petty cash used for household expenses.

Old servants stayed on in our household until their dying days, in spite of the fact that when World War II broke out in the Pacific we

could not continue to keep our large staff and most of the servants had to go home to their villages.

Another old servant we called "Second Grannie" or Yee P'aw, because of her seniority. She had been a wet nurse for my cousin, Maggie Cheung. Later she came into our household. Mamma often told us that when I was an infant Mamma happened to be very busy one day and Yee P'aw was asked to give me a meal from her breast. Hence I always felt a little closer to her than to the other servants. She was a stout, matronly type of person, and rather good with very young children. Before and after Grace was born, Father had his long illness, so Yee P'aw bore the main responsibility of taking care of Grace, the baby at that time, while our maternal grandmother, P'aw P'aw, was the mother-substitute for the rest of us.

Yee P'aw's elder son was a postman, and her younger son worked in our Peak house as an assistant house-boy. Mamma gave him this post as a special favour to Yee P'aw. Yee P'aw also had a grand-daughter, whom we called "Ah T'o." She was educated in Mamma's Po Kok Free School and after World War II Father employed her in the household until she married.

As I said earlier, Mamma was very fond of flowers and fresh vegetables. There were, and are, no garden hoses or sprinklers in Hong Kong, the watering being done by a gardener with a watering can. Hence we had two gardeners for the three Peak houses. The Head Gardener, named Cheung, was very old but efficient. We used to enter a number of exhibits in the Flower and Vegetable Show. The gardeners were so good that they frequently won many First and Second Prizes, which brought us both honour and pleasure. Occasionally we would win one of the silver plated challenge cups or some of the smaller silver cups. The old gardener was so careful about his flowers and vegetables that for a week or so before each Show he would not allow us to touch his plants and did not even like us to walk around the terraced parts of the garden where the plants were being nursed. He said that if we touched them, we might leave fingerprints and thus spoil their chances of winning. But, when we were older and more careful and he knew we wanted to encourage him and admire his work, he was quite happy to let us look at them.

In the days before World War I, wages were very low as was the cost of living. Gardener Cheung's monthly salary was HK\$9. It was his custom to get from the Bank brand new \$1 notes and ask Mamma to pay him with a \$10 bill giving her \$1 change. He then carefully hoarded

the \$10 bills in a large Horlick's Malted Milk bottle with a tin lid. He hid this bottle in the dry potting earth in the cellar of our house. Evidently he thought this was safer than putting the money in a Bank. Certainly it was more convenient, as it would have taken him a couple of hours to go to a bank. However, one day he became terribly upset, so much so that he wept, because he found to his horror that white ants had eaten through the metal lid of his bottle and devoured parts of his precious bills. Fortunately, except on one bill, the serial numbers were still visible, and Brother Ho Wing arranged for the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank to reimburse him for the notes that had been destroyed.

In Mother's household at Idlewild were several other old servants. On her trips to the New Territories, Kui P'aw was usually her companion. Later Kui P'aw brought us several residents of her native village to help run the farm and to demonstrate the production of silk at the Wembley Exhibition in London in 1924 and 1925. However, Kui P'aw's connections with our family were deeper than just this. Mother, for instance, adopted Kui P'aw's seventh younger sister as a "God-daughter." And Kui P'aw's younger brother found a responsible job in Jardine's shipping department, probably through Father's recommendation.

Moreover, Kui P'aw often advised Mother on traditional Chinese customs and practices, the advice based, naturally, on what prevailed in her native district of Shun Tak. This relationship, perhaps, accounts for some of the very conservative ideas to which Mother adhered, in spite of the fact that she had travelled several times to England and America and had been exposed to western ideas.

Around the turn of the century it was customary for many Chinese families in Hong Kong and China to have one or more "mui tsai" (literally, "younger sister"). This system has been much misunderstood and misinterpreted by Westerners, who refer to the younger sisters as slave girls. Quite often, villagers experienced severe financial hardships which were all too common under the social and economic conditions then prevailing. Some of the able-bodied male members of the family might emigrate abroad or adults, male or female, might go to Hong Kong to make a living. A young daughter, however, could not emigrate but could be "given" to a wealthier family, either in China or in Hong Kong, who could better afford to feed, clothe, and support the girl until she grew up. In return, the wealthier family, besides assuming the future responsibility for the young girl, presented a "lucky money" red packet to her parents, which enabled them to pay off their debts of the moment. The girls helped in the household duties and sometimes

they were educated. In those days, as the common saying went, a daughter in the family was a financial loss, whereas a son could carry on the family name, and shoulder its responsibilities, generation after generation through his male heirs.

Mother and Mamma each had "mui tsais" from time to time. Two of those in Mother's household were nieces of Kui P'aw's, the elder of which had herself suggested that she be presented to our family.

Mother's staff also included a female tutor, "Old Teacher Yim," who had taught Victoria when she was young and lived there. When Mary went to live with Mother, she became Miss Yim's principal student, but all Mother's "mui tsais" also studied under her. Some were fond of learning and became quite well educated in classical Chinese, while others had less success. When these girls reached marriageable age, Mother, or Mamma, as the case might be, found suitable husbands for them and they were married from our home and provided with a suitable trousseau. As the years went by, they would bring their families to visit us, especially at Chinese New Year. The Hong Kong Government forbade the "mui tsai" practice some time after the First World War.

Another member of Mother's household deserves special mention. Although her name was Au Sing Cheung, we called her "Choi Cheh," literally "Sister Choi" as her name as a child had been Choi Wan (meaning "jade disc of many hues"). She had come to us in early childhood. Her mother, Sui Sum, was one of the old amahs at the Peak, but Choi Cheh stayed in Idlewild. Mother often related how Choi Cheh at first gave the impression of being a slow learner. Possibly she was too young or the work might have been too difficult for her at the time. Mother said that Miss Yim would teach Choi Cheh a passage in Classical Chinese during the day and Mother's sister (who was then living with her) tried to help the girl memorise the passage in the evening. One night, despite numerous attempts, the child still could not recite it. The tutor became impatient, but Mother suggested that the matter be left for the time being. The following morning, as soon as she awoke, Choi Cheh was found reciting the passage to herself in bed—evidently her sub-conscious mind having mastered the difficulty during the night.

Choi Cheh refused to get married and remained in Mother's service. She died a year after her mistress, having served her for some sixty years. In her later years she served as Mother's secretary-treasurer for household affairs. Mother often regretted that she had not given Choi Cheh an even better education. "Sister Choi" had by herself picked up some spoken English; but if she had also learned the written language

she would have been even more valuable to Mother in her later years. When Choi Cheh died, Mary, at Father's request, obtained a burial site for her near Mother's—so that they would be near each other forever. We all liked Choi Cheh and regarded her as Mother's companion rather than as a servant.

Among Mother's many servants, I was also especially fond of one we called "Sixth Aunt" or Luk Goo. She had had bound feet, was very refined and quiet, and could read and write Chinese. Her specialties were embroidery and needlework. I well remember the pleasure of going into her room to watch her embroider. Mother frequently went into Luk Goo's workroom to chat with her while she worked. When we were teenagers, before 1920, Mah Jong became popular in Hong Kong and Mother acquired a set of Mah Jong tiles. Occasionally visitors came to play with her, but more often she would have several of her household staff, frequently Kui P'aw, Choi Cheh, and Luk Goo, join her in a game. Despite this, she was very prim and proper and was always dignified in public. Everybody was in awe of her.

When Victoria married, Mamma asked Luk Goo to embroider parts of her trousseau, and when my daughter was born in 1941, three years after Mamma's death, Luk Goo, quite old by then, embroidered a little red jacket, and a red silk square which was lined with strong material and made into the cloth strap used to carry children on one's back. This is a traditional gift presented by a young mother's parents to celebrate the occasion when a newborn baby is a month old.

Some years after Father's death I sensed that old Luk Goo was concerned about her future. I was then quite friendly with a Buddhist organization which ran an Old Ladies' home, the Chi Lin Home for the Aged where inmates who were still able-bodied assisted in looking after those who were more helpless. Once accepted, a resident could stay there until death. It had a good Buddhist atmosphere, so I asked Luk Goo if she would like me to recommend that they admit her. She gladly accepted the offer, although she had a brother, a sister-in-law, and nieces with whom she could stay if absolutely necessary. They were, however, not well off and their living quarters were very small. At first some people questioned whether I had done the right thing, but after her death they saw that Luk Goo had ended her days peacefully with full religious rites. In earlier times such old people would have spent their last years with younger relatives. This is becoming more and more difficult because of changing concepts and the general "busyness" of modern life.

Lastly, the story of our blind masseuse, first employed by Mamma, and who, upon Mamma's death, cared for Father. This girl was named Kong Wai Lin and we called her "Lin Goo." She came from the Ming Sum School for the Blind in Canton. While I was lecturing on Education at Lingnan University (1930-32), I visited the school, where Mrs. Laird, the wife of our Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences taught the art of massage to blind girls. Because Mamma suffered badly from rheumatism, I asked if she wanted me to employ one of the blind girls for her. She said yes and this was done. After I left Lingnan for further study in England in 1932, the first blind girl left our employment and was succeeded by Lin Goo. The latter was very intelligent, had an excellent memory, and had memorized the *Four Books* of the Confucian Classics and many passages of Chinese literature. She was also proficient in Chinese braille and was able to read that way. She had studied various academic subjects, and had once taught arithmetic in a primary school for sighted children. She learnt her way around the Falls perfectly and could recognise all our voices. When Father employed her after Mamma's death, he used her as his night nurse because she had no trouble getting what sleep she needed during the day. As she seemed to need very little sleep, she had much spare time which she used most wisely. After World War II, Father chose to live in Idlewild again, which proved to be very convenient for Lin Goo. She got in touch with two of the best private hospitals and arranged with the staff to let her know if a patient wanted a massage. If a car was sent for her, she, of course, had no transportation problem; but if not, she paid an outside amah to accompany her. Nearby households also availed themselves of her services from time to time.

In addition, Lin Goo still had time not only for knitting but also to teach a dozen or more sighted people to knit. All we had to do if we wanted her to knit something for us was to let her feel the pattern we wanted (or use a pattern she knew) and take our measurements by passing her hands across our backs to see how many spans we were each way. The sweaters she made fitted very well. Her "students" would either tell her or let her feel how far they had progressed and she would tell them how to go on with their garment, when to increase or decrease the stitches, and what else to do. She could distinguish each of her own dresses by its texture, but referred to it by its colour.

Several banks in Hong Kong are allowed to print bank notes and the sizes and shapes of each are distinctive. She remembered the shape, size, and denomination of each kind of banknote, and was never confused by what she received. By her industry and frugality she was able

to save quite a considerable amount of money which she wisely used to buy a flat for herself even before she left our household. She found a friend to live in one of the cubicles into which the flat had been subdivided and to assume the duties of a landlady: renting out the remaining cubicles in the flat, managing it and collecting the rent. In time she was able to buy a second flat. Now she lives in part of one of them, with her friend, and rents out the second in its entirety. I believe she is one of the happiest members of our former household, in spite of her affliction and the fact that she has no family at all. Because of her amiable nature, she got on well with most of the other servants, though some of them might have been envious of her opportunities and success in finding outside employment and thus providing for her future.



## HOW MAMMA EDUCATED HER CHILDREN

Mamma set high ideals for us. She wanted us to dedicate our lives to the service of humanity, and at the same time live up to the good traditional Chinese virtues which she herself believed in. We were to honour and respect our elders and follow their advice since it came from their maturity and wisdom. We were to have the best possible Western education and at the same time not neglect the study of Chinese culture, for she wanted us to reap the maximum advantage from our dual heritage. She encouraged us to be independent, so that, if necessary, we could manage without relying on someone else (such as a husband) for support.

It was quite natural that she should be as deeply concerned about the health of her daughters as that of her sons, but rather unusual that she was also concerned about the girls' education. She was much opposed to the false though traditional values expressed in the old Chinese saying that "it is virtuous for a woman to be uneducated." Consequently, she laid great emphasis on our "Character Education," to which she attended herself whenever she had the opportunity, especially during meals and on other occasions when the family was gathered together. She provided us with tutors and governesses and sent us to the best schools she could find.

When we were young, Mamma frequently told us that we must respect and honour Father's first wife even more than we did her. This was in accordance with Chinese custom and good manners. At Lunar New Year, at Festivals, and on our birthdays, we were taught to go to the family town house—Idlewild—to show our respect for our ancestors

and for Mother by "kowtowing" to them. We also "kowtowed" to other senior relatives, and even, when appropriate, to our Chinese teachers. We were taught to call the servants in the house Elder Brother or Elder Sister. If they were very elderly, they would be called Uncle or Aunt, or even Granny. Mamma emphasized how very polite Father was, even to the servants, and, as I have already pointed out, she would extol his many virtues and encourage us to follow his good example.

Often she would ask one of the servants, especially the men-servants, whether they sent their children to school and would give them a little lecture on the importance of women being able to read and write.

Mamma often told us she reiterated to Father that regardless of how much of a financial inheritance he left us, it was essential that we be given the advantages of a good education. That, she explained, no one could take away from us; not even a fire or a robbery could deprive us of it, as the Chinese saying goes. On the other hand, material things could be lost and so were not as enduring.

According to traditional Chinese custom every child's education is begun with a formal ceremony known as the "Opening" or the "Beginning" of his Education. The date for this is chosen carefully, after consulting the *Chinese Almanac* to find a lucky day in a lucky year. To be sure that a lucky year is chosen, the ceremony might be held as much as a year before the child starts school.

Another important requirement for a Beginning of Education ceremony is for a particularly well-educated person to act as the teacher on that occasion. Even some distinguished scholars in Hong Kong are still available for this purpose with the family later providing a little red packet (of whatever size it feels appropriate) containing the fee.

The ceremony is generally performed early in the morning symbolic of studying industriously—with the child generally carried "pick-a-back" to the school or schoolroom, a red silk cloth covering his head and face so that nothing could be seen that might be an unlucky omen. I believe it was regarded as unlucky, for instance, if one saw a dog or a cat on the way. Chinese custom and folklore are full of symbolism and make use of anything considered propitious, the name of which sounds similar to the word for the idea to be conveyed. For instance, there would be various things set out on a tray at the "Education" ceremony. These would include onions ("ch'ung") to denote that the child would be intelligent ("ch'ung ming"), celery ("k'un choi") to signify industriousness ("k'un lik"), and so on. As an example of non-verbal sym-

bolism, some Cantonese families would make a large pancake, have it wrapped in red paper, and placed on the chair before the child sat down, symbolic of the wish that the child would stay in his seat to study instead of running off frequently, or even playing truant. Many other such symbolic practices were used to represent good learning habits.

There was, of course, a portrait of Confucius in the schoolroom, and upon entering the child would have the covering on his head removed and be led to pay his respects to Confucius by kowtowing. The child would then "kowtow" to his teacher, who might give him, in return, the ubiquitous red packet of "lucky money" for good luck, and perhaps also say something meant to augur well for his education.

The passages taught at these Ceremonies would always be the beginning and ending of the *Three Character Classic* which, freely translated, read as follows:

"Man's nature is originally good. In accordance with whatever environment he comes in contact his habits become different. If he is not properly taught, his nature will deviate (from the proper path). The important thing in the method of education is concentration.

"When a child is young he learns, and when he comes to manhood he puts into practice what he has learned. Thus he can serve his superiors and his government well and his influence promotes the welfare of the people. In this way he earns a good reputation, which reflects glory on his parents and on his ancestors who have gone ahead of him, and sets a good example for posterity.

"Others bequeath to their children much gold and wealth but I only have this little Classic to teach mine. Diligence is useful but play is useless. Avoid the latter and persevere in your studies."

The teacher would explain the passages in simple language, and the child would repeat them after him several times. A little calligraphy would also be taught, using a writing book where identical rows of simple characters were already printed in large red type. The teacher would stand behind the child and guide his hand to help him ink over, with black ink, a few rows of the printed characters. The ink would be fresh ground from a stick of dry ink and some water, on an ink slab. This symbolic ceremony would then end, having been limited to these first lessons in reading and writing.

Soon after we moved up to the Peak, Mamma engaged a Chinese

tutor who resided in our home so that we could have daily Chinese lessons until we were ready to go to an English school. We had two such Chinese tutors: first Mr. Chiu Kut Um and then Mr. Leung T'ing Yuk. In addition, we had an English governess, four of them, in fact, one after another, so that our spoken English would have a firm foundation, but most of the time we studied with our Chinese tutor. The two years prior to going to an English school, we had an English teacher at home for two hours a day, four times a week. The teacher, Mrs. Bishop, was the headmistress of the Victoria School (a British Army school) and came to us after school hours.



*Mary, Daisy, Victoria  
Robbie, Alexandra, Irene, Eva and Eddie  
around 1910*

Our first tutor, Mr. Chiu, was a remarkable person and a born teacher, and we are all grateful to have had him as our tutor for so many years. I have often felt that he had much to do with my continuing interest in education.

Mr. Chiu was a native of the Tung Kuan district of Kwang Tung province and had passed the first in the series of Imperial examinations, so he was entitled to be called a "Hsiu ts'ai." He must have been in his early fifties when he first came to us, because I well remember his saying, after he had reached sixty, that he was then entitled to three portions of the sacrificial roast pork that was distributed when his clansmen paid their respects at their ancestral graves during the Spring and Autumn. The first portion was his normal share as a male descendant (females did not receive any); the second because he had earned the

Imperial academic honour; and the third because at sixty he was regarded as a village elder.

In this way Mr. Chiu used his personal experiences to explain to us the customs and traditions of China. Similarly, he used simple stories to illustrate traditional Chinese virtues, for instance the one about the legendary Emperor Shun (whose reign is traditionally dated 2356 B.C.-2255 B.C.) who remained exceedingly devoted to his parents in spite of the fact that they were not always kind to him and were partial to his younger brother. Another favourite story of "The Old Master" (as we called Mr. Chiu, a typical term of respect for a teacher), was that of Chang Liang who died in 189 B.C. Chang Liang eventually became the chief counsellor of the founder of the Han dynasty, but there was a story about his early life which Mr. Chiu was fond of telling us—no doubt in order to teach us the virtues of patience, perseverance and humility. It is related that one day Chang encountered a poor and aged man, sitting at the side of a bridge, and as Chang approached, one of the old man's sandals fell over the side of the bridge. At the old man's request, Chang climbed down under the bridge, picked up the sandal and put it back on the old man's foot, who told Chang to meet him at the same place at dawn five days later, but to be there before he, the old man, arrived. Twice when Chang came, he found that the old man had arrived before he did and a new appointment had to be made. The third time he stayed at the meeting place overnight to be sure of being there first, and the old man praised him for his perseverance and gave him a book, saying: "He who studies this book shall become a King's preceptor!" The book gave Chang such wisdom that his advice helped his patron Liu Pang to establish the Han dynasty in 202 B.C.

As Mr. Chiu lived in our household, the school day began whenever we were comfortably ready after breakfast, rather than at a fixed hour. We adjourned for lunch and then resumed until late in the afternoon when "The Old Master" told us we were dismissed from school. We did not go by the clock but the hours were, roughly, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Our house had a wide L-shaped veranda, and "The Old Master's" desk was in the corner, while our tables were arranged along the sides of the angle. For some years, Charlie and Jimmie Choa, the sons of one of Mamma's best friends, came up to the Peak every day to study with us.

Mr. Chiu would call us, in small groups, to his desk to explain each new lesson. The groups were small enough for our individual differences to be taken care of and he always explained the new lesson

in language simple enough for us to understand. For instance, at a very early stage we began the *Confucian Analects*, which can be quite difficult if not simplified. My childhood school copy of this classic shows in vermillion Chinese ink the punctuation and tone marks that Mr. Chiu had written in for us, and, in black, the definitions that he had written at the top of each page. From the dates written in red ink above each assigned lesson it was obvious that he had only taught us two or three lines each day when we first studied a passage. A second, and later, date showed when we had revised a by now longer passage, and sometimes there would be a third date related to the same assignment. At first, Mr. Chiu explained the lesson in very simple language so that we thought we understood; he took us over each section again and again until we learned it by heart. We usually repeated the previous lesson to Mr. Chiu on the second day, standing with our backs to him and our book in his hand. If we could do this satisfactorily, we would proceed; if not, we would repeat the lesson until he was satisfied.

As children we found it quite easy for us to commit passages to memory, much more so than for adults. When the same passages have been learned and re-learned a number of times, they become a part of us. Many parts of the Confucian classics deal with moral principles and universal truths, and it is intended that they serve as guides for lifelong behaviour. Some of the passages have even become idiomatic expressions among illiterate people who learned them from others who had the good fortune to have gone to school.

An important part of our daily school work was to practice Chinese calligraphy (handwriting). As young children we were assigned to trace two double pages of large characters (each 1½ inches to 2 inches square) having a total of 32 characters on the two pages. In time, we copied, free-hand, half a page or a page of small characters (about ½ inch square), the amount depending on the number of characters on a page and on our stage of development. Chinese calligraphy being an art form as well as a method of communication, this was partly equivalent to an art class. And practicing Chinese calligraphy also steadies the nerves and develops manual dexterity.

It was altogether a happy and congenial atmosphere, and "The Old Master" became almost a father figure to us, especially as Father was very ill when we were young and Mr. Chiu took a keen personal, parental interest in each of us.

Mr. Chiu had also studied many books about Chinese herbal medicine, and when we had a slight fever, he would feel the pulse,

diagnose what was wrong with us, and prescribe the Chinese herbs which were to be boiled into a thick soup of which we were to drink a whole bowlful. As these herbs were often bitter or unpleasant tasting, there was a small packet of raisins to be eaten after the medicine. Anyone who has drunk Chinese herbal medicine appreciates the meaning of the proverb:

“Good medicine is bitter to the mouth (or taste) but effective for our illnesses. Similarly sincere advice may be unpleasant to our ears, but is beneficial to our conduct.”

Mamma and Mr. Chiu frequently reminded us of this quotation.

Another of Mr. Chiu's specialities was to predict the weather. I remember distinctly occasions when there was bright sunshine and the amahs were hanging the laundry on the lines just below our schoolroom. But “The Old Master” would warn them not to do so as it would soon rain. The amahs would not believe him, but sure enough the downpour came and the washing had to be taken in again in a hurry. We were always much impressed and asked Mr. Chiu how he could predict the rain with such accuracy. He explained that he had seen rain clouds in the distance and that a strong breeze was blowing in our direction. Consequently, it was quite sure to rain.

He had never studied English, but Mr. Chiu had read many western scientific books and articles in translation, and what he taught us of the planets and of world geography was to stand us in good stead when we went to an English school later on. Besides guiding our studies of some of the Chinese Classics, he taught us a number of the masterpieces of Chinese literature. He was also fond of Chinese poetry, but though we were taught some of its fundamentals, we did not have time to learn much about this special field of study while we were with him. However, I still can picture him reciting softly, in a musical tone, some of his favourite poems, either from memory or reading from a book in his hand, after he had given us our daily lessons. Chinese poetry is often very musical.

When we were quite young, Mamma often borrowed or rented one of the Jardine launches and the Choa family and ours would go on outings to Stonecutters Island (at the Eastern end of the harbour), which was not yet a military base. Those of us who could swim a little enjoyed trying to swim around the boat, or in the shallow water near a beach, or playing on the beach and perhaps digging for clams in the sand to take home to eat. The second son of the Choa family, Choa Po Min, an elder brother of Charlie and Jimmie, was a good swimmer and

he tried to teach us when we were beginners. Each of us was put inside a life-buoy, which was tied to the side of the launch, or we would be given water wings.

"The Old Master" often went with us and sat watching at the side of the launch. If any of us drifted too far away, he would call us to come back nearer to the boat's ladder.

At other times Mr. Chiu would take us on walking picnics to the old fishing village called Aberdeen. Sometimes he would take us to the Tai Shing Paper Factory in Aberdeen, which was on the site now occupied by the Aberdeen Technical School, as we were always fascinated to see dirty old rags being made into clean white paper.

Once we went for a day's picnic to the Tytam Tuk Reservoir several miles away, and Mamma came with us. As she could not walk that far, two of our chair bearers brought a light weight mountain chair in which to carry her. It consisted of two long bamboo poles joined together by two short wooden rods, one at each end, which rested on the shoulders of the bearers. A wooden plank was fixed in the middle of the long poles for the rider's back to rest against, a second plank was suspended from the poles for the rider to sit on; and a third was suspended lower down as a footrest. It was surprisingly comfortable and very light and easy to carry.

If we had no scheduled activity after school, we would have the pleasure of listening to Mr. Chiu read to us from the famous historical novel *The Three Kingdoms*. When this novel was finished, he started the *Many Kingdoms*. We did not like this nearly so well, as it was not as well written and there was too much fighting in it.

If any of us did anything wrong, especially during schooltime, Mr. Chiu would invariably refer to it as soon as possible, and explain in language which we could understand why the behaviour in question was unacceptable. We girls were hardly ever punished by him, but frequently our younger brother, Shai Lai, would do something of which "The Old Master" disapproved. Instead of immediately meting out punishment, he would reason with Shai Lai, asking him if he felt he deserved to be punished. On most occasions Shai Lai had to admit that he did, but even then the punishment was more often than not deferred (as a sort of suspended sentence) until the next delinquency, and this acted as a kind of deterrent.

Even when Mr. Chiu did mete out punishment, it was very mild. His two favourite disciplinary measures had special names. The first was "Balance the Stick" and the second was "Smell the Rod." The former

was designed mainly to force the culprit to sit still for a while. He would have to sit at the teacher's desk and balance a bamboo stick thirty inches long and a centimeter in diameter (usually used as a pointer) with one end resting on the student's head and the other on the desk. If one sat still this presented no problem, and Mr. Chiu soon decided that the ordeal was over.

We were, simultaneously, being given lessons in Chinese shadow boxing and in some of the exercises we used a smooth rod made of light wood five feet long and two inches in diameter. When not used, the rod was kept in a corner of the classroom; the punishment consisted of having to stand in that corner, but instead of calling it standing in the corner as English teachers do, "The Old Master" called it "Smelling the Rod." They were harmless, yet effective, forms of punishment and even then not often inflicted on us.

Mamma was fond of the stage and went to the Chinese theatre whenever she had the opportunity, but seldom had time to do so. Several years before we went away to school, Mamma became acquainted with one of the owners of the Tsing P'ing Theatre in Macao. Sometimes we went to the performances there, but those in the outdoor theatre mat-sheds seemed even more enjoyable. The Chinese seafaring folk celebrate the Birthday of T'ien Hou, the Goddess of Heaven or of the Sea on the 23rd day of the third lunar month. Each year, as part of the celebration, people in Macao built a large mat-shed in front of the Goddess' temple and invited the best theatrical company in the area, the Yan Shau Nin, to perform, generally for four nights and three days. These companies toured around and were engaged by theatres in Canton, Hong Kong or Macao.

In those days, the casts were all male, and a famous actor, Ch'iu-lai Sheung, played the principal female role. Mamma could understand not only the speaking parts, which were delivered in a kind of Mandarin called Theatrical Mandarin, but also a good deal of the singing, possibly because she had read so many of the singing story books when she was in her early twenties.

The plots were taken from famous stories, many from *The Three Kingdoms*, though occasionally there would be a new play that the actors had written themselves. The first night of each set of performances generally began with a short play showing Ssu Tsin (died 318 B.C.) being made Prime Minister by all six kingdoms during the period of the Warring States, or one named "Heavenly Blessings," or other similar works chosen as good omens and not necessarily as good theatre. They

were, of course, accompanied by a small orchestra of Chinese string, drum, wind and percussion instruments. These evening performances generally started soon after 7:00 p.m., and the first long play ended around midnight or a little earlier, when we children would be sent home to bed.

Mamma generally stayed on with a friend or a member of our staff until the end of the second play, which would be around 2:00 a.m. There would often be a third and less important play, put on by the very junior actors, which lasted till dawn. We seldom stayed for this one, not even Mamma. But once, on the last night of a series, I remember that she stayed at the mat-shed theatre all through the night and early morning. She came home for a short rest and breakfast, and then took the day boat back to Hong Kong, leaving us to sleep on until the afternoon!

This all took place before 1912; for, as has already been pointed out, our dearly beloved maternal grandmother, "P'aw P'aw," died on February 19, 1912 and Mamma was inconsolable. Father wanted to cheer her up somehow. He knew she would not go to the theatre while she was in mourning, so he arranged for a Chinese couple, both of whom were actors, to teach us children Chinese acting. Father evidently felt that this would be a good way to divert Mamma, as she could regard it as part of our education and not as satisfying her interest in the theatre as such.

We were taught two plays (or operas), one of which, "General Yang Punishes His Son," had many of us in the cast, Eddie played General Yang, Daisy his mother, Robbie his son, and Eva was Mu Kwai Ying, a young woman warrior in love with the son. I was Eva's servant girl, Mu Kwa.

The other was "The Song of the Lute" in which only Eddie and Eva appeared. Others of us, however, learned to sing the words of this opera even though we were not in the cast.

Of course we were young and our performances were amateurish, but our parents seemed to enjoy having us learn something of the art of Chinese acting, and the experience at least helped us to understand Chinese operas better when we had the time and opportunity to see them, which as it turned out was seldom the case.

I must, however, add a final touch to the account of our acquaintance with the theatrical couple. The husband's theatrical name was Gold Mountain Seven, and the wife's Beautiful Jade, although, because she had a flat nose, she was more often known as Flat-nosed Jade. They were opium addicts, and in those days opium smoking was still legal.

So every time they came to our house to teach us Chinese opera, we had to supply them with opium and the necessary smoking equipment. They would lie down on high, hard, square pillows on either side of a small low table placed in the middle of a large couch, and have a few smokes before they were relaxed enough to teach us how to act. Each pipe stem was about eighteen inches long and an inch and a half in diameter with a bowl near the far end of the pipe. In the centre of the bowl there was a hole, which was very small. The opium was inserted into the tiny hole after being hooked on a steel wire and cooked on a little lamp placed on the low table between the two smokers.

When our eldest sister, Victoria, first went to school the family lived at Idlewild and she went to the Diocesan Girls' School, which was then not very far away in Rose Villas in Bonham Road. In 1906 we moved to the Peak but Victoria continued to go to the same school, coming down by Peak Tram every morning, with a family rickshaw from Idlewild meeting her at the Kennedy Road Station and taking her to the school. Each day after she returned from school, if she did not have too much school homework, she would come to our Chinese teacher for a lesson, but the system proved unsatisfactory, as she would be too tired to learn much. In 1908 Victoria went to San Francisco with Father, Mamma and Eddie and stayed there many months. She remembers that during that period our parents often entrusted her with adult duties such as paying the monthly bills at the grocery store.

When they returned to Hong Kong, Victoria went back to the Diocesan Girls' School and rejoined her class. She studied there until the school moved to Kowloon at which time our parents felt it was too far away. She says that Father then offered to send her to England for further study. But by that time Grandma had died; and though Father had been through his long illness, Mamma still had to spend much time seeing to his convalescence. So Victoria took on many responsibilities related to the household and the younger children. She felt that if she accepted Father's offer, Mamma's health might not stand up to the strain of resuming the additional duties that would revert to her. So, as a dutiful daughter, Victoria declined the offer.

By 1914, when Eva and I were to begin school after having spent several years studying under "The Old Master" and various English teachers, Mamma considered the alternatives and decided that the most suitable choice, despite its distance from our home, was the Diocesan Girls' School because of its high standard of spoken English.

Daisy also went to the same school, but as a boarder, and Robbie

joined its junior school for two years, where they took boys as well as girls. He then went on to Queen's College, where Eddie had already been a student since 1913. Hence with the exception of Mary and Eddie, all our siblings attended the Diocesan Girls' School at one time or another.

Every day, in order to get to school, Eva, Robbie and I went first by rickshaw from our home to the Peak Tram station, took the tram into town, walked, or rode sedan chairs, for the half a mile or more to the Star Ferry, and crossed the harbour. Mamma had arranged with her friend Mrs. Choa for us to cross the ferry with her elder daughter, who was a student in the senior class of the same school. And an uncle of ours (who had a car garaged near the Kowloon Star Ferry pier) agreed to have his chauffeur pick us up at the Ferry in the morning and at the school in the afternoon to drive us the mile between the school and the Ferry. We had to leave home early in order to arrive at school before the first school bell rang.

At that time the school's financial assistance from the Government was small and it was run on a tight budget. But it got along financially, the Head and a large proportion of the small staff being dedicated teachers from England. Because of this teaching staff, the school could (and did) require the students to use only English while in school, and they learned spoken English more rapidly and thoroughly there than in other schools.

However, because of the British origin and training of the teachers, some of the subjects on the curriculum were not really appropriate or meaningful for Hong Kong children. For instance, the school taught mainly British and European history and British geography, with little attention to local or to Chinese problems. Fortunately when we reached the upper classes, the geography teacher, Miss C.A. Ferguson, taught the geography of Asia.

The school taught arithmetic because it had practical application. Since the University of Hong Kong did not then admit girls, there was little incentive to use the limited time of the staff to teach branches of mathematics required for entrance to the University but not necessarily of practical use. Eva and I were fortunate in that a couple of months after we entered the school, Miss Nora W. Bascombe also joined the staff. She and the Headmistress, Miss E.D. Skipton, were the only college graduates on the staff, and they were both excellent.

Miss Bascombe soon persuaded Miss Skipton to allow her to add algebra to the curriculum of the upper classes; she never succeeded in

introducing geometry, so we had to study that subject privately. For about two months Miss Bascombe voluntarily taught it to three of us girls an hour a week after school hours, but soon even this was not allowed, and we had to work on our own. However, Miss Bascombe allowed us to bring our written exercises to her to correct. Thanks to these efforts we were able to pass in mathematics and to satisfy the other' Matriculation requirements when we sat for the Senior Local Examination in December 1918.



*Teacher at the Diocesan Girls' School  
Miss Nora W. Bascombe*

The Diocesan Girls' School attracted girls of many different nationalities. For instance, girls in our class were English, Danish, Portuguese, Eurasian, and Chinese. One girl was of German and Chinese descent, others were Indo-Chinese. The fact that many of the girls were of mixed parentage did not bother anyone; in fact, the atmosphere in the school was such that we never considered such matters.

When Eva and I graduated from the D.G.S., there was no higher

education open to girls in Hong Kong. Vocational training existed in Normal School classes for prospective teachers, training for nursing, and the study of commercial subjects.

Fortunately, when Mamma returned a Lunar New Year call to the wife of our adopted brother, Mrs. Ho Wing, she enquired where the grandchildren, who were our age, were going to school. Mrs. Ho Wing's daughter Diana was then attending Sheung Fu Girls' School, a school for Classical Chinese studies, and Mamma asked to see some of her exercise books. She was impressed, and when she came home she told Eva and me that she wanted us to go to that school. As she also wanted us to help her at home and to get involved in other interests, she had us ask if the school would let us attend for only half a day.

The school authorities pointed out that except for the highest class, the curriculum was spread out over the whole day. But the schedule for the senior class was arranged differently because two of the principal teachers also taught at St. Stephen's Girls' College and here we would not lose much if we only went in the mornings. Since we were older than the girls in the lower classes, it was decided to admit us to the senior class. I was, in fact, rather apprehensive about the arrangement, especially when I discovered that in this school everything had to be committed to memory, a learning process to which I was no longer accustomed. Very soon, however, we left the school to accompany Victoria to Tsingtao where she was to recuperate from a very severe illness.

After we returned to Hong Kong, in the Autumn of 1919, we rejoined the Sheung Fu Girls' School, this time for the regular day's schedule and enjoyed the experience. In the Spring of 1921 Eva went with our parents to Peking as their secretary. I remained to take care of the house and our younger siblings, but continued to attend Sheung Fu as a full-time student.

Although the Sheung Fu Girls' School concentrated on Classical Chinese studies, the girls were also taught arithmetic. The standards varied so greatly that there were as many as six groups studying different sections of the arithmetic textbook, but the teacher somehow succeeded in teaching each group in turn, during the hour-long lesson. We were also taught the elements of Chinese art, learned the names of the Chinese paints, how to do simple colour paintings on rice paper, and how to use the various shades of Chinese ink.

In each lesson in Classical studies, we had five or ten minutes at the beginning to review, in melodious chorus, the previous lesson, which

we had had to learn by rote. Then we would put away our texts and the teacher would write on the blackboard the section we were to write out from memory. We had to make an exact reproduction, with each character written correctly.

The passages chosen were often what the teacher regarded as the most important in the whole lesson, so we paid special attention to them. I remember that once I even dreamt that we would be examined on a given passage. I quickly arose and revised the material once again, and was delighted the next day when it was in fact used in the Examination!

In September 1921, the University of Hong Kong admitted girls for the first time, and I was one of the first three to enter. Eva, at that time, was in Peking and entered the following term. Our parents, especially Mamma, were pleased that we were able to enter the University. As there was then no hostel for girl students, we were exempted from residence, but were expected to participate in all the academic, cultural and student activities. During the academic year 1921 to 1922, there were only three, and later four or five Lady Undergraduates, as we were then politely called, among more than three hundred male students, with whom we were careful to maintain a friendly, brother-sister relationship. But we endeavoured to keep up with the men in our academic pursuits, so as to overcome any impression that girls would not be able to hold their own in an institution of higher learning. It was pioneering work and Mamma encouraged us as always.

Ever since Eva and I had started our education Mamma encouraged us to work hard at our studies and promised that after we finished school in Hong Kong she would take us to England to continue our education. Aside from our Seventh Aunt (who had taken her only daughter and her three sons to England), no other local family had ever sent daughters abroad as students, although many had sent their sons. Mamma, however, was thoroughly convinced that the educational opportunities that would be open to us in England would be worthwhile and so repeated this promise to us often.

As has been pointed out, a couple of years after we left the Diocesan Girls' School, the University of Hong Kong changed its policy and admitted girls, and we were able to do our undergraduate studies in Hong Kong after all. We still wanted further training though, and pressed Mamma to fulfill her long-standing promise to take us to England for advanced studies.

In January 1927, Mamma, then fifty-one years old, embarked on

one of the most lengthy of her travels. She, Eva, and I, together with her faithful servant and companion, Leung Yee Goo, left for England. I remember Yee Goo had several skirts made for the trip, and wore one of them with an overcoat over her skirt and tunic wherever we were actually travelling. In those days females didn't wear pants in public, and Yee Goo would have looked very conspicuous in her normal costume of tunic and trousers, especially as her short boots were children's size since she had had bound feet. On the boat she shared Mamma's cabin and her food was brought to her on a tray. She had never eaten beef in her life, and continued to abstain from it during the trip. She was quite happy to accompany Mamma on this trip and often spoke of it after her return to Hong Kong.

I was Mamma's constant companion during this year and a half of her life and saw the intense interest she took in our activities, how she participated in them as much as she could and encouraged us whenever possible. Yet, I also saw how she was restricted by the traditional ideas among which she had grown up. I have often felt that among the Chinese, Mamma's generation and mine have been hardest hit by the rapid social changes that took place during our lifetimes. On the one hand, we grew up in a semi-feudalistic society, where normally a family such as ours stayed put in one place, in fact seldom left the family home and lived very much for one another. Parental authority reigned supreme and one's horizon was pretty much limited to the family and the clan. On the other hand, we have had to adapt to different ideas and ideals, where members of a family may have to be separated, often for long periods of time and where the goal, at its most ideal, is to serve society rather than familial or personal ends. We have also had to learn to think for ourselves, and to make our own plans for the future. There were occasional conflicts between these two ways of thinking and compromises had to be worked out. The emotional strain, at least, has been easier on later generations.

We went by boat to Suez, travelled by car and camel to see the Pyramids and the Sphinx, and rejoined the vessel at Cairo. We still have a photo with Mamma on one camel, Eva and me on another, and Dr. K. C. Yeo, who joined us at Penang, on a third. The Sphinx and a pyramid are in the background. This photograph was one of Mamma's most prized possessions.

We disembarked at Marseilles, most of our luggage remaining on board to London. After a few days seeing the sights of Paris and the saddening cemeteries of Flanders, we crossed to London. I remember



*Pyramid and the Sphinx, February 1927. Mamma, Irene, Eva and Dr. K.C. Yeo*

how depressed Mamma and I felt at the miles and miles of slums before we reached London late in the afternoon. We first put up at a hotel and later found accommodation in a boarding house at 11, Lancaster Gate, London, W. 2.

One day, soon after our arrival and while we were still looking for a boarding house, Yee Goo was left in our room at the hotel. A newspaper reporter had heard that we were in London, went to our room and found only Yee Goo there. As she spoke no English the reporter could not interview her, but, in his story, he described her briefly, noting that she wore a skirt, and that "with a wave of her arm" she indicated that the rest of us had gone out.

Once we settled in at the boarding house, Yee Goo reverted to her trousers, discarding the skirt which she felt was too cumbersome. She had her meals with the boarding house staff, and became quite friendly with them despite the lack of communication. Every Friday, Mamma bought lean pork and Yee Goo salted it so that on the Sunday

morning she could boil a large pot of salted lean pork congee for us to enjoy. Yee Goo particularly enjoyed going with us to the London Zoo, or to Madame Tussaud's to see the famous wax figures. She was most impressed the few times I took her down an escalator in London's Underground system.

All this time, from March 1927 until the following Spring, Mamma and Yee Goo stayed with us in the boarding house. Eva and I each had a small single room, while Mamma and Yee Goo shared a large, doubled-sized bed-sittingroom. Robbie was also studying in England at the time and sometimes spent a weekend with us. At other times he came on a Saturday or a Sunday and took us for a drive to some well known place or event such as the famous Military Tattoo at Aldershot. One way or another we saw the sights in and around London, and even went further afield to see Stonehenge.

After breakfast every day, Mamma went out with a bagful of bread crumbs to feed her friends the ducks, at the Serpentine (a small artificial lake in the Hyde Park-Kensington Gardens complex), ten minutes' walk from our boarding house. At the crossing at Bayswater Road, the Metropolitan policemen always considerately stopped the traffic and escorted Mamma across. She would walk into the park a short distance to the statue of Peter Pan where there were usually a number of ducks in the water, sometimes followed by ducklings, which Mamma loved to see. Occasionally in the park she could see sheep being shorn. If nothing else, she was content to sit on a bench at the foot of Peter Pan's statue, enjoying the fresh air and sunshine, meditating or saying her prayers on her Buddhist rosary. Mamma thus spent most of her forenoons.

In those days, the Chinese Government had a legation in London rather than an Embassy, and Dr. Wei-Cheng Chen, the acting Chinese Minister, and his wife, were very attentive to Mamma. For the Lunar New Year of 1928, we were invited to a large tea party given by the Chinese diplomatic, professional, and business communities for the children of the Chinese residents (mainly ex-seamen) of London's Chinatown, often called Limehouse. Most of the children had English mothers from the East London area, could speak no Chinese and knew very little about China except what they saw in the films, which usually depicted the Chinese as villains. This tea party impressed Mamma and me very much. Recalling it stimulated my interest in 1932 in doing voluntary social work in the Chinatown of East London.

Both Mamma and I were much impressed by a visit to the original

Dr. Barnado's Homes, a huge residential charitable institution for destitute children. The project touched Mamma's heart and sowed seeds for both her future work for girls from poor families in Hong Kong and my own future voluntary activities.

During the Summer of 1927, Mamma went with me to attend an International Student Service Conference at Schiers, near Chur, in Switzerland. I shall never forget the thrill when I woke in the train and saw, for the first time, snow-clad mountains. What a glorious vision! Mamma had of course seen similar sights in her travels in Japan.

Remembering that there was a famous sanatorium in Germany's Black Forest not very far away, we went there for a few days' rest after the Conference, to enable Mamma to take the mineral baths. After that we attended another International Students' Conference in Rome. Besides attending the meetings, we were able to see many of the sights of Rome; we even visited the Vatican, and the Pope received a group of our Conference members.

From Rome, Mamma and I returned to London via Venice, Vienna, Prague, and Germany. We had been advised by the travel agents in London that the journey from Vienna to Prague by train was long and tedious, but that there was an excellent connection by air. When we made travel arrangements in Rome, we were again advised to take that flight, as it would save so much time and not be any more expensive. So we made the necessary reservations and on the appointed morning proceeded to the airport in Vienna. Unfortunately, the weather was very bad and the plane we were to take was a "Baby Moth." There were three passengers (a full load!) wanting to make the trip, a man and ourselves. The plane was like a small sports car, with the pilot and one passenger sitting outside the cabin and just two seats inside, which Mamma and I occupied. Mamma had been told in London that people with weak hearts should not travel by air. She had a "nervous heart" and often suffered badly from palpitations. While we were waiting for the plane to take off, Mamma felt a little nervous fearing she might pass out during the trip. She tried to persuade me to write a postcard, to be mailed to Father if anything should happen to her, saying that she had decided on the trip of her own free will, and I was not to be blamed for taking her on the flight. I appreciated her thoughtfulness but refused to write the card and assured her that everything would be all right.

The flight proved more eventful than I had expected; in retrospect I realize it may have been pretty risky. The weather was so bad that the man in the front seat lost his cap and his goggles, and although Mamma

was never seasick, the air turbulence made her feel uncomfortable. Adding insult to queasiness, at the end of an hour, the scheduled duration of the flight, the plane landed and we assumed we were in Prague. But we were told that it had been so foggy that the pilot had been unable to find the Czech capital, so we were back in Vienna! We waited for another hour and then went up again. This time we reached Prague but were thoroughly exhausted and spent the rest of the day relaxing instead of sight-seeing. However, we had two flights for the price of one and Mamma was very thrilled that she had flown. She wrote to Father relating her experience and I believe he was quite envious.

Mamma returned to London with me and stayed there for most of the winter. Winter in London can be very trying; damp, cold and exceedingly uncomfortable for anyone suffering from rheumatism or arthritis. During the Winter of 1927, there was a slight snow fall one night, the snow melting as soon as it reached the ground. The weather then turned cold and the melted snow froze to ice. Fresh snow fell and covered the ice, and the pavements and streets became very slippery. An elderly lady living in our boarding house went out after breakfast to post a letter, slipped on the ice and broke her leg. As she was Mamma's age and size, I was afraid the same thing might happen to her. We immediately arranged to get out of London and revisit the sanatorium in the Black Forest where we had stayed in the Summer, even though we realized there would also be ice and snow there. We remained there a fortnight during my Christmas holidays.

Next Spring, during the Easter Vacation, because my Final Examinations for the Teachers' Diploma would soon be due, Mamma arranged for two old ladies from Lancashire to come down to London. They were the Hartshorne sisters, one of whom had been a ladies' companion to Mother. She was to stay with Mamma in London, while the other accompanied me and a girl friend for a short study-vacation on the South Coast. We rented a small house by the seaside at Littlehampton, near Worthing, so that we could concentrate on studying in a quiet environment and a wholesome climate.

One day Mamma telephoned me to say that she had received a telegram from Father asking her to come home to attend Robbie's wedding. It was difficult for her to decide whether to do so, or to remain with me until I took my Diploma of Education Examination a month later. She told me that she was thinking of replying that she could not leave. I felt that if I returned to Hong Kong, it was very unlikely that I would ever get away again to finish my studies, but I

realised how important the wedding was to her, since it would be the only opportunity she would ever have to welcome a daughter-in-law into the family, even though she had borne three sons. So I told her that I would cut short my stay in Littlehampton and come back to London to discuss it with her.

I tried hard to persuade her to return accompanied by Yee Goo, of course, and even to ask Miss Hartshorne, or someone else, to go with her too. I understood Mamma's dilemma. She was pulled in two directions, trying to adjust to two different cultural patterns. On the one hand, her traditional upbringing made it almost essential that she be at this family function. On the other hand, she realised how important it was not to cut short my educational opportunities while her background made her most unwilling to leave me abroad without her.

It was decided that Mamma had to return and I felt it my duty to go with her since she insisted on this. We booked passage, packed up, sent off the baggage, all in about a week. There were still a few days left which we spent in the Lake District as our boat was sailing from Liverpool. Eva came over from Dublin to join us and we all enjoyed the beautiful and restful scenery.

Eva did not go home with us but remained in Europe for several more years, studying medicine in Vienna, Budapest and London and specialising in gynaecological surgery. When she returned home, she taught at the University and soon after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War and Mamma's death, she left Hong Kong to serve with the Chinese Red Cross. After the Second World War she established a private practice in Hong Kong, and later moved to New York.

Meanwhile I wrote a heart-to-heart letter to Father, which I sent via Siberia, since this took only about a fortnight instead of the full month for a letter sent by sea. I explained that I was not yet satisfied with my studies, because not having taken any examinations, I had nothing to show for my year in England and Europe, that I had had to go home for family reasons, and I looked to him to help me get out again. I explained that it was no use going back to London immediately, because I could not take the examination until a year later, but I could fit in a year at the world-famous Teachers College of Columbia University and then go back to London the following year to sit for the Diploma Examination.

So Mamma, Yee Goo, and I sailed from Liverpool and in due course reached Singapore. I was glad to find a letter from Father there. He tried to comfort me, but said that though he sympathized with my

predicament, he could not make any promises nor even give me much hope of my being able to leave again.

Later, I tried to make an appointment to see Father to press my case about going away again but he kept putting me off. Finally I wrote him the long memo we had found to be a necessary device to focus his attention on a subject of importance to us. Sooner or later he would find time to read it; whereas if we tried to speak to him, even if we got an appointment, his time was so carefully allotted that we might be cut short before we had been able to fully explain our problem.

Finally, while he was visiting Macao, he wrote me a short note, saying that "if you have not made up your mind not to take anybody's advice," I might come to Macao to discuss the matter with him. I did not quite know what to expect, but I felt that I must grasp this opportunity. On the other hand, I did not dare to tell Mamma why I was really going to Macao, so I simply told her that Father had sent for me and that perhaps he wanted to talk to me about some memoirs that he had been writing from time to time. For occasionally he did discuss these with me.

I took the morning steamer to Macao, and that afternoon Father had me bring pencil and paper and dictated his reply to my long memo. He explained that he wanted to ask me a number of questions and wished both of us to have a written record of his questions and my answers. He did not want one of his secretaries to write it as this might embarrass me.

I remember that he said he sympathised with me in principle, but wanted me first to give serious consideration to the question of marriage and of my own future in general. He said I had already been to England and Europe and had a degree from the University of Hong Kong, so if I wanted to teach in Hong Kong I had sufficient qualifications; but that he was not sure of my real aims and ambitions. He added that if I wanted to get married, I was then at a suitable age (almost 24), whereas if I again went abroad and delayed marriage for a few more years, I would be older than was customary for girls of our upbringing to get married.

I appreciated the sensible way he was going about replying to my request, and so had to consider carefully my reply to him, which, of course, had to be in writing. I tried to state my aims and ambitions as clearly as I could, endeavouring neither to aim beyond my abilities nor to set my goals too low.

As to marriage, I told him very frankly that the subject did not

bother me nor did I have anyone in mind whom I wanted to marry. He made me promise not to get married or even engaged without first consulting him, and in the years to come I conscientiously kept my promise. The cross-examination over, I remained with him there in our Macao house very much enjoying my stay and his company. Soon, however, I began to be concerned with the passage of time as the end of the summer was approaching. So one day, in his presence, I picked up the *South China Morning Post* and ostentatiously looked up the sailings for the U.S.A. Suddenly he realized my anxiety and asked when I would have to leave. I told him that the latest boat that would get me to America in time for the last day for registration would leave in about a fortnight. He immediately told me there was no time to lose, and that I must quickly return to Hong Kong and get a visitor's visa rather than wait for a student's. He added, however, that the most important thing would be for me to obtain the consent of both my mothers who, he warned me, were opposed to my departure.

I left Macao the following morning and, as soon as possible, went first to see Mother to ask for her permission. She told me that I must go to my own mother rather than to her. Knowing my softness of heart and how close I was to my parents, she reminded me of the Confucian saying that "when one's parents are living, one should not travel far."

I did not have the courage to approach Mamma, so was delighted and most grateful to receive a letter from Father from Macao, enclosing a short note he had himself written, addressed to my two mothers. He explained that in connection with my wish to go abroad again, he had carefully cross-examined me, was satisfied that as parents they should encourage me, but that he did not dare to make the decision himself and left it to my mothers to decide. I did not even dare hand the letter to Mamma, but simply placed it on a table where I knew she would see it. After she had read the letter, she asked me when it had arrived. I said it had just come that day. She guessed that in spite of what he said, Father must have already given me his consent. So she appealed to my emotions and my affection and reminded me that all three of my parents were old and not in very good health. She asked me what I would do if any of them suddenly became seriously ill. At first I maintained that we would not be so unfortunate. But, finally, I said I would certainly expect to be informed, and if I could return I would do so immediately, as I had done in 1926 when I heard that Uncle Ho Fook had died and I cut short my travels in Central China. She stated that she would certainly be dead by the time I could return home, as her

health was so poor and uncertain.

But this was only one side of the internal conflict between Mamma's ardent wish that her daughter remain in Hong Kong in the traditional family role and her sympathetic understanding of my desire for learning and my eagerness to experience a life broader than one limited to that traditional role.

She sighed, hesitated, and sorrowed, but at last agreed to my going abroad again. As a present for my trip, she gave me a pocket Kodak camera, so that I could take photographs, send them home to her, and thus to enable her to share vicariously in my activities. I did this as well as I could.

Mamma always asked us to write to her regularly when we were abroad and used the Chinese quotation: "The two words 'p'ing an'—meaning 'safety'—are worth a thousand ounces of gold." When we did write, she felt that she was sharing in our life. So during the academic year 1929 which I spent at Teachers College, Columbia University, (and the following six months on the Continent of Europe) I wrote to her every week or ten days.

After Eva and I had left home to study abroad, Jean and Grace, in due course, entered the University of Hong Kong. Jean, in her *Eastern Windows Western Skies*, has given an account of her life, her first and second marriages, and her work. She and her children have settled in Australia.

After Grace had graduated from the University of Hong Kong she travelled by the Trans-Siberian Railway to Europe, which was in those days a unique experience. She studied in London until she returned to Hong Kong to marry Horace. Many years later, after he had died, she taught, first in Hong Kong and then in London. Later she spent a year studying how to teach maladjusted children and has since worked in that field in England, with her second husband.

When I joined Lingnan University as a lecturer in 1930, Mamma let Florence join me to study there. Instead of remaining at the university until she graduated, however, she married Dr. K.C. Yeo in 1933. They had three children in quick succession and by the time she was in her early forties she was already the proud grandmother of half a dozen grandchildren. She travelled widely with her husband, who became the Director of Hong Kong's Medical and Health Services.

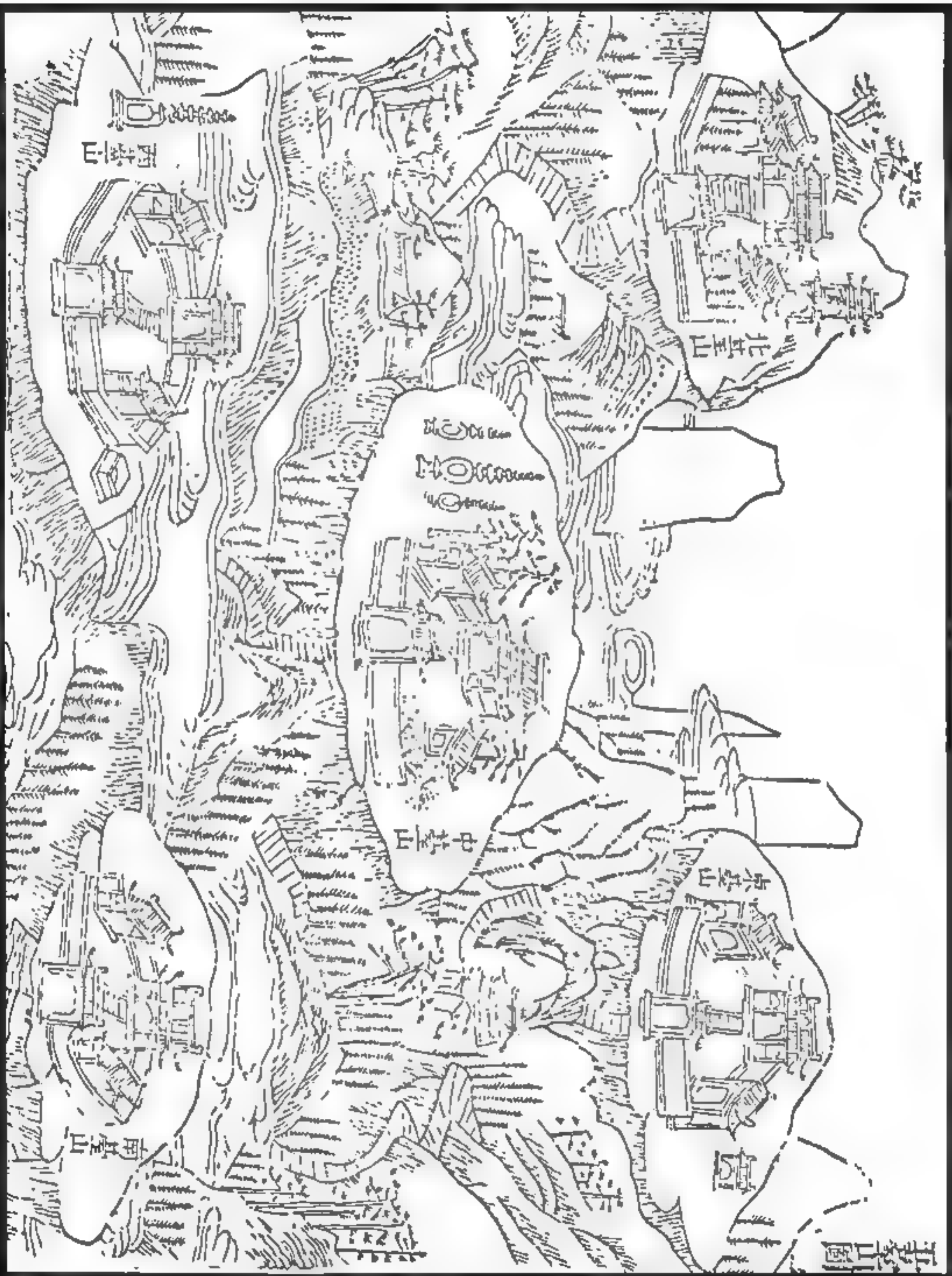
## MAMMA'S RELIGIOUS INTERESTS

Mamma began the autobiographical chapter of her *Travelogue* by writing: "My family has for generations been Buddhist and my grandmother and mother were particularly devout." Consequently, from childhood, she too was a dedicated Buddhist.

All traditional Chinese families are to some extent followers of Confucius, the Sage who lived 2500 years ago and who glorified what were even then ancient practices, particularly that of venerating one's parents and other ancestors (commonly known as ancestor worship). Such families also believed that some things are supernatural and referred to Supernatural Power variously as "T'ien," meaning Heaven; "T'ien Di," Heaven and Earth; "Shen," Spirit or Spirits; "Shang Ti," literally "The Lord Above," (this is the term Chinese Christians use for God); or simply "tsao hua," which means "creation and transformation."

In the *Doctrine of the Mean*, written mainly by Confucius' grandson Tzu Sze, several passages describe the solemnity of religious worship and could be applied to practically all religions. This was one of the *Four-Books* which every Chinese schoolchild learnt by heart, but only later came to understand as he matured. These passages illustrate how Confucius emphasized a proper attitude towards the Divine. Of course Confucianism is not a religion in the western sense, but rather the prescription of a moral code.

Many families were also Buddhist and/or Taoist, and would add to the basic traditional Confucianist beliefs the religious worship and practices peculiar to their faith. There were still other religions with



Wu-t'ai Shan

## 筆記

余家世信佛。逮吾祖母。吾母尤篤。故余髫齡時。即知敬禮三寶。志脩梵行。雖感化于庭訓。亦根之夙具也。清光緒十七年。即西曆一千八百九十一年。隨父任職九江關。方喜色笑常親。何圖遭家不造。越歲父病。百藥罔效。竟棄吾等而去。昊天罔極。悲慟曷已。客途悽愴。無父何怙。遂卽奉母來港。蒙麥氏表姊視如手足。親愛逾恒。因請求吾母。以余同效娥英故事。母戚誼情深。俯從其請。光緒二十一年正月。服闋後。奉母命。嬪于何氏。家庭意志。亦稱相得。尤蒙姑嫜憐愛。不啻所生。是年五月。隨夫往滬。漫遊扶桑。美利堅諸國。歷時九月。始歸。光緒二十二年三月。先姑棄養。莫名哀痛。七月。涉鼎湖。于餘福堂。奉安先姑父母等靈位。

followings of various sizes. Two of the larger, though still small, groups were the Mohammedans and the various denominations of Christians. But the claims of exclusive religious dominion inherent in these faiths were essentially foreign and uncongenial to the Chinese because of their eclectic religious or spiritual traditions.

In a Buddhist-Confucian household, such as the one in which Mamma grew up, there would be a family shrine to honour both the deities of Buddhism and the immediate and distant ancestors of the family. For instance, there might be a coloured scroll (either hand painted or reproduced by a printing process) published by one of the Buddhist institutions in China, containing pictures of the principal Buddhist deities. At the top were "The Three Precious Buddhas" of which the central one is almost always the Lord Gautama Buddha (Sakyamuni Buddha, the Enlightened One). He was an Indian prince who became a monk and is the principal figure in the Buddhist faith.

On his right is the Amita Buddha whose name, in the phrase "Nam Mo Or Mei T'o Fut," Buddhists frequently say over and over again as a prayer. Even the simplest illiterate or any child can do that, and frequently when you see a Buddhist praying and moving his fingers quickly on his rosary beads, he is just repeating this phrase. Amita Buddha's principal function is to save souls and lead Buddhists to the Pure Land, the land of supreme happiness in the Western Heavens. When a person is about to die this is also the Buddha to whom relatives and friends pray by chanting his name in the presence of the dying person so that he can forget his earthly worries and concentrate on thinking of his future life of eternal bliss. On the left of Gautama Buddha is the Bhai Sa Jya Buddha whose function is to give health. He is sometimes pictured as holding a pagoda, the symbol of safety. The sick, of course, pray to him for recovery.

On the scroll would also be pictured Kuan Yin, "The Goddess of Mercy," a Bodhisattva who is the patron saint of all who are suffering and is especially kind to women and children. It is said that Kuan Yin was originally a man, but took the form of a woman so that women would feel better comforted and closer to this deity. She is usually shown with two other deities, the Bodhisattva Man-ju-sri, the God of Wisdom, and the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. Most Westerners have seen pictures or statues of the "Laughing Buddha," and a number of other deities would also be depicted on this picture or scroll. Alternatively, there might be, in the family shrine, statues of the more important and popular deities, carved in crystal, ivory or stone or cast in some metal.

For the ancestors, there is often a superscription written on red paper, or on a carved wooden plaque, saying, "The Various Generations of Ancestors of the . . . Family." Below this, each deceased member of the more recent generations would have a wooden tablet with his or her name inscribed on it. The tablet is made when a person dies, and it is believed that after the funeral the soul of the departed resides in this tablet. In Chinese villages it is usually housed in the Ancestral Hall of the clan. (Most villages consisted mainly, or even solely, of the members of a single clan.) The tablets are arranged in the hall tier on tier, often with the exact generation of the departed ancestor recorded on the tablet, such as the twentieth generation—i.e., counting from the first clan ancestor, the one who had originally settled in that particular village.

In urban areas a family may keep the tablets of up to three generations in a place of honour in the home of the eldest son of the family. The younger sons would have only a single plaque for all the generations, as two tablets were never made for the same person. In recent times "modern" families that do not believe the soul resides in the ancestral tablet often use for the more recently deceased, a photograph instead of a tablet, and in this case the younger branches could have their own photographs of those they wished to honour. Other families might have the names of their more recent ancestors listed, on a piece of red paper, with the dates of their births and deaths written below each. The red paper would be framed and hung above the family shrine.

Incense was offered at the shrine daily, either by the housewife herself or by someone to whom she delegated this important duty, such as her eldest daughter-in-law, or a trusted servant. As has already been pointed out, on the secular holidays of particular relevance (the Lunar New Year and the Dragon Boat, the Moon and the Winter Solstice Festivals) special food would be offered to the ancestors and vegetarian dishes to the Supernatural and to Buddhist deities.

According to age-old custom, the first and fifteenth of every lunar month was also important for traditional Chinese families. In addition they would have special celebrations several times each year, according to the lunar calendar, for such events as anniversaries of events in the lives of Buddha and Kuan Yin. The fifteenth of the first, seventh, and tenth moons, especially of the first moon, were particularly important days, being the three "yuan" days, the upper, middle, and lower yuan. During our childhood years, a religious family such as ours would then eat only vegetarian food. Fortunately, our cook was gifted and his

vegetarian dishes were as delicious as those prepared with fish or meat. But Mamma did not want to force her staff to follow her example. So for the servants the normal food was available. But those that so chose, usually a few of the women servants, might also abstain from meat or fish on such days and arrange to have only vegetarian food.

Besides burning long incense sticks several times a day, especially when one paid respect to one's ancestors, some families had a special brass or bronze urn in which the sandalwood itself, chopped into thin, small pieces, burnt more or less continuously. Candles were also used. Normally, the Chinese used only red ones, with white candles reserved for the first few days of a funeral ceremony. In more recent years, many families had long brass cylinders made, in the form of candlesticks, which were filled with oil and a cotton wick, and lit when appropriate. Other homes have electrified these cylinders so that each has a bulb at the top instead of a wick. Many have an "everlasting light"—generally to pray for longevity, which Chinese seem to value rather more than many other people do.

In some homes, as in all temples and public places of worship, a bell or gong would be struck during prayers, and a hollow wooden instrument, originally shaped like a fish, hit with a special stick with a knob at the end to beat time during prayers. In recent years it has been adopted as a musical instrument by percussion bands in elementary schools in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

In Spring and Autumn each year, at the Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Memorials, it was Mother's responsibility to supervise the offerings to be brought to the graves of the Ho family ancestors in the Chiu Yuen cemetery. Mamma, because her brother was away from Hong Kong for many years, undertook a similar responsibility for the Cheung family. It was unusual in Chinese families for a daughter to assume these responsibilities, but the only son was away and Mamma wanted the ceremonies to be fully and properly performed.

Such rites were important events in the lives of most of the Chinese in Hong Kong, relatively few of whom had become Christians. We thought of them as taking place on days on which our ancestors were "remembered" rather than "worshipped," although the same word, "baai," is used for both.

My parents must have worked out their details meticulously and in a memorable fashion, for these annual events are among those I remember most vividly from my childhood.

When her mother died, Mamma set aside part of the estate of the

deceased as a fund to take care of the expenses of these ceremonies. When her Tung Lin Kok Yuen Buddhist temple was built in 1935, Mamma gave the responsibility of preparing the offerings for the Cheung family graves to this institution, so that there would be permanence and continuity at least so long as the institution survived. After the Second World War, our family simplified the procedure and the offerings taken to the cemetery, as can be seen by comparing the photo taken on April 5th, 1973 with the description in the following paragraphs. For the Cheung family graves, only vegetarian dishes are now prepared.

The food laid out on the graves was elaborate and plentiful. For instance, the following was what was usually laid out on my paternal grandmother's grave. The food was set out in rows on a flat section in front of the tombstone. In the middle of the front row, i.e. the one nearest the worshippers and furthest away from the tombstone, there was an entire roast pig. There was also a whole un-cut chicken and a large piece of pork, both quickly cooked in boiling water, and a cooked fish—these made up the traditional "three meats." They are the main customary sacrificial foods and are frequently used in religious ceremonies for ancestors. There were also large, deep, round wooden boxes containing sponge cakes made of rice and wheat flour, called "sung kao," and "da faa."

There were three wooden stands one with red buns, another with "chess cookies," which look very much like the low cylindrical pieces used in Chinese chess; and the third with Chinese dumplings or "chung" of varying shapes, made of steamed glutinous rice and containing black bean paste or savoury fillings (or just plain dumplings without fillings). Each large dumpling was wrapped in wide bamboo leaves and they were arranged in pyramidal tiers on the wooden stands.

When babies are born, the families usually announce the good news to their relatives and friends by presenting them with "red eggs" on the third or twelfth day, or when the baby is a month old. Hence red eggs—hard-boiled eggs dyed red—are associated with the idea of fertility. Consequently, in order to convey this propitious idea, there were red eggs at the graveside ceremony, a good-sized wooden box of them, since many of the clan could be expected to take some home. A large plate of pickled young ginger slices was provided to be eaten with the eggs. There would also be a large yam (or taro) with clusters of little ones attached to it—also symbolic of a large family.

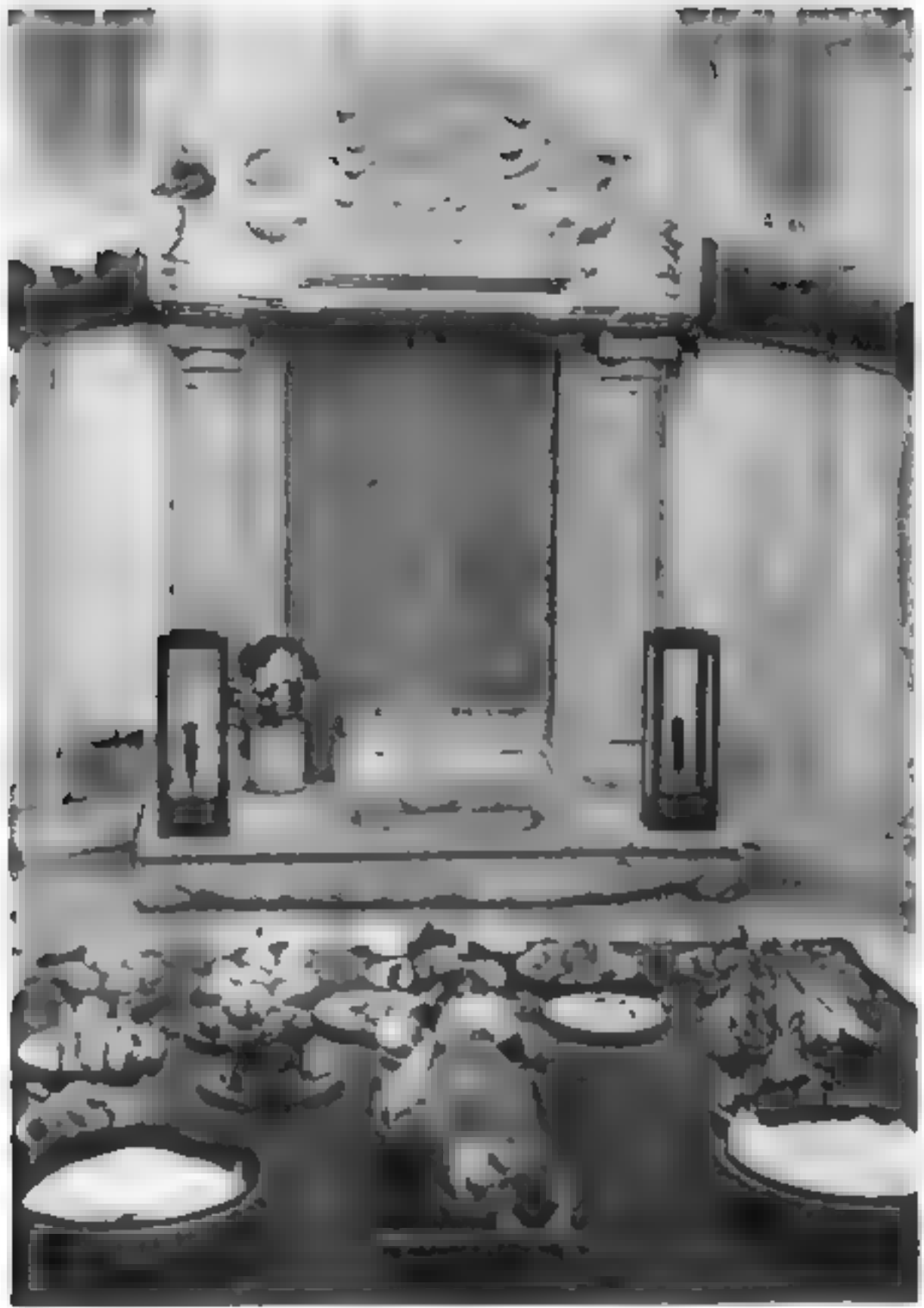
Another box contained sugar cane, cut into ten inch lengths, symbolizing the idea of life being sweeter at the end; and lettuce, symbolic

of liveliness and activity because its Chinese name means literally, an "alive vegetable," thus perhaps signifying that it would bring liveliness to or promote the "life force" of those that ate it. Nearest each tombstone were placed three cups each of rice, tea and wine, nine in all; and of course three pairs of red chopsticks. There were also two candles (ours were inside large glass cases, as it was often windy) and three large sticks of long-burning "longevity incense," the thickness of one's finger, near the base of the tombstone. A flower-pot filled with sand was placed in the foreground so that each "worshipper" could have the smaller incense sticks he personally offered inserted into it.

By and large, the same offerings, at times with minor modifications, were used for other religious or memorial ceremonies—ancestor worship in the home, festivals, anniversaries, weekly services after a person has died, and the like.

At the cemetery, when the family goes to pay their respects at a grave, one of the male descendants first goes to the back of the tombstone, which generally has a semi-circular wall behind it on a slope. Directly behind the tombstone, on the wall, is a stone with a gilded circular design in the centre. (The caretaker of the cemetery would normally have prepared a fresh clod of earth, with green grass, the colour signifying life, still growing on it.) Using this clod as a paperweight, he would place under it three sheets of paper about 6 inches by 10 inches, the top one red and the others white. If the grave has three arches instead of one, there would be a set of these papers at the top of each arch. Sometimes on the top left and right hand corners of the grave site, there are two additional little shrines erected in honour of the "god of the land" and of the deity protecting that particular grave.

In the days before the Second World War, the ceremony at our family graves was elaborate. If Father was well enough to participate, he would name an hour—generally 11:00 a.m.—when the ceremony would start. If he could not attend, arrangements would be made without him. The various branches of the family would assemble at the grave of our grandparents and one by one, in strict order of seniority, pay their respect. In turn, each worshipper, male and female, would step into place facing the tombstone, be handed three incense sticks by an attendant, raise them with both hands as a symbol of respect and bow slightly. The incense sticks were then placed by the attendant in the flower pot of sand referred to above, and the worshipper did the full "kowtow." On the last kneeling, he was handed a little cup of



*Our Grandparents' grave with offerings*

Chinese wine, which he raised with both hands level with his head and then, after lowering his hands again, carefully poured the wine onto the grave. While the senior members of the family were going through these observances, the others stood up as a sign of courtesy. After all the members of the family had had their turn, paper money and packets of paper clothes for each of the deceased would be burned in a nearby large cement and brick incinerator to ensure that the ancestors were well-equipped, and a long string of firecrackers lit to chase away evil spirits.

After we had paid our respects at the graves of our departed relatives and eaten our lunch at the graveside of our grandparents, we left. The servants took care of the roast pigs, the rest of the uneaten food, the utensils, and whatever else was to be taken home. The senior servants then had another busy session in the courtyard in the centre of Idlewild, carving the pigs, weighing each piece carefully to assure that

the portions distributed to the various members of the family and of the clan were of the appropriately correct size. Generally the pork was accompanied by other foods that had also been brought home. This work was handled almost entirely by old and trusted servants, under Mother's general supervision. For our dinner, the cook prepared several fresh dishes. These were first placed at the family shrine, in front of the ancestral tablets, and all of us went there to pay our respects, after which the food was taken to the dining room and served.

Mamma grew up in just such an atmosphere and, in turn, provided the same for her children. As she became more and more religious in her later years, some of the rituals became more elaborate, but by and large they remained the same. Every day, before each meal and before she went to bed, she went to the family shrine to pay her respects, and when we were not too rushed we did so too. Normally she would kowtow three times but in later years, when she could take more time, she would do so even more times. Fortunately, the exercise involved was good for her rheumatism.

We had always had occasional vegetarian days, but after her mother died in 1912, as I have already mentioned, Mamma began to avoid eating meat and fish entirely. For the convenience of the cooks, and because she felt it necessary for the children to have meat, she was at first willing to eat the vegetables even though they had been cooked with meat, as is done in many Chinese dishes. In later years she became stricter with herself in following a vegetarian regimen, had separate dishes cooked for her, and, more and more often, fasted completely for part of the day. She never knowingly ate beef in her life, even when she would eat other meats; and she never allowed a live fowl to be brought home to be slaughtered—it would have to be killed before it was brought home. We frequently kept chickens at home, but only for their eggs. Even when they stopped laying, the chickens were not killed for food. Vegetarianism is an integral part of Buddhist ideas concerning reincarnation and transmigration of souls. Devout Buddhists hold strongly to the precept "thou shalt not kill." When it was necessary to kill for food for others, Buddhists have a saying that they should not hear or see the killing, and not allow any animal to be killed for one's own sake. In this way they compromised when it seemed necessary to do so.

Whenever Mamma visited our house shrine, she would pray. Sometimes it was just a brief, silent prayer; at other times she would sit down nearby and read through an entire Buddhist sutra (one of Buddha's sermons). In her autobiography in the *Travelogue* she states

that when Father was very ill, she became desperate and turned more and more to supernatural help. She was only thirty-six years old and naturally enough didn't want to become a widow—and one with eight children. She wrote that she recited the *Diamond* and other *sutras*, and asked for Divine help. It seemed to her an answer to her prayers when, almost by accident, they found Revalenta Arabecca Food, manufactured in England for convalescents, fed Father a little of it, and found that it agreed with him. Henceforth her faith became even more steadfast.

In addition to praying at home, on certain occasions Chinese Buddhists go to a temple to offer special prayers. For instance, early in the Lunar New Year, the devout select a lucky day from the Almanac and go to pray for blessings for themselves and their families throughout the coming year. Towards the end of each year, a similar date is chosen and a visit paid to offer thanks for the blessings of the passing year. Many of our amahs did that year after year, but until her own temple was built I do not believe Mamma made such visits, because the temples were dark, not very clean, and often in slummy, even disreputable, neighbourhoods. Of course, there were no Buddhist temples on the Peak.

Buddhism is a very profound religion, the scriptures of which are not easy to comprehend. Consequently, there was much inadequate understanding of it, which led to many superstitions, especially among the illiterate and less educated believers. Mamma often worried about this, and even as a young woman she hoped some day to do something to help correct these defects among the members of her faith.

Occasionally, for instance when a senior member of the family died, both my mothers, together with other members of the family went to Ting Hu Mountain to have special prayers offered for the souls of the recently deceased and of other ancestors. These visits must have been both interesting and spiritually very satisfying to Mamma.

When she visited famous temples or mountains, Mamma was very busy. Besides the daily services which she would attend, she arranged to have special ones performed. For instance, there might be a week of special prayers said by members of the clergy several times a day and dedicated to deceased members of the family of the worshipper. At other times there would be a more elaborate ceremony, called a "Water and Land" Service, in which the prayers would chiefly be devoted to saving the souls of those who had died in accidents. Many families participated and used the occasion to commemorate their ancestors and relatives. There would be a small fee for each paper name tablet especially inscribed (one for each soul thus commemorated) and burnt

at the end of the ceremony.

While in these temples, Mamma was also interested to hear the high priest explain the intricacies of the more difficult parts of the Buddhist scriptures. Sometimes there would be a series of lectures on the more obscure Sutras. At other times it would be more like private lessons with questions and answers and individual tutoring for specially devout students. In Buddhist circles it is customary for devout followers to become disciples of one or more of the famous high priests, who are then regarded as their "Masters." Mamma had two "Masters," one from the Putu Monastery in Ningpo, near Shanghai, and the other from the Ch'i Hsia Monastery in Nanking.

About the time of the completion of Mamma's pilgrimages, there was a revival of interest in Buddhism among many of the better-known Chinese families in Hong Kong. Some of the priests from Central China also became interested in travelling to Hong Kong. On one such occasion, in 1922, the High Priest of the "Golden Mountain temple" in Chinkiang in the Yangtse region visited Lan Tao island, which is the largest of the Hong Kong islands and which contains a Buddhist monastery. His spiritual fame was such that he was popularly known as the "Living Buddha." Mamma thought of going to the island to hear him preach. However, Father felt that this was too risky for her safety, because in those days there were still bandits and pirates in and around Hong Kong. He suggested that Mamma invite the High Priest to visit and stay at our home. He accepted and in connection with his visit, Mamma relates a coincidence which gave her the impression of Divine intercession. Soon after the priest arrived at our home, news came that Victoria had gone into labour for her second child. As she had had a very bad time with the first child, followed by a long illness, Mamma was worried and fearful. She immediately went to be with Victoria and at the same time persuaded the "Living Buddha" to start prayers in our home to ask for the safe delivery of mother and infant. Sure enough, by the middle of the night, Victoria was delivered of a son, with mother and child doing well.

From then on famous members of the Buddhist priesthood were often invited to Hong Kong, either to conduct special religious services or to lecture on the Buddhist Sutras. Sometimes these activities were open to the public but held in our home, mostly at Idlewild as on Father's sixtieth birthday and once on an anniversary of the birthday of his mother; once it was held in our home on the Peak. Some lasted for many months. Mamma and the members of a few other families were the prime

movers in these activities, which were participated in by thousands. All were glad to have the opportunity to learn more about their religion and to take part in activities hitherto unknown in Hong Kong.

However, Mamma still felt a need to go further, to establish Buddhist schools and to set up a seminary in which children might study the scriptures from an early age. This, she hoped, would in time result in an increase in the numbers of those able to teach the scriptures in the schools. She realised that the writings of her religion were so difficult that for most nuns and many other Buddhists, few of whom had had much education, it would not be easy to understand its philosophy or its underlying concepts very clearly.

Further, when she visited Dr. Barnado's Homes in England, she became convinced that one of the best ways to help both Buddhism and the poor people of Hong Kong would be to develop free educational facilities, thus training people who could understand her religion and be able to pass it on to others. Consequently, in 1930 she established the first Po Kok Free School in Macao, and a second one, with the same name, in Hong Kong. In 1932 she established the Po Kok Buddhist Seminary at Castle Peak, in the New Territories.



*Children from first Po Kok Free School visiting Mamma at "The Falls" at the Peak. Mamma and members of her family at the back row (with a teacher), early 1930.*

Mamma wanted to build a temple in Hong Kong, to serve as a centre for religious activities in the Colony, but for many decades that remained wishful thinking and she was much worried about the futility

of her hope. However, in December 1931 Father celebrated his Golden Wedding Anniversary with Mother and as part of the celebration gave each of his two wives a hundred thousand Hong Kong dollars. After much searching and many disappointments, Mamma finally found a building site of just over 12,000 square feet, in a section of Hong Kong Island called Happy Valley. Mr. Fung Tsun was her architect, and he created a handsome building which combined Chinese architecture on the outside with impressive Buddhist features inside.

For the statues of the Buddhist deities, for the furnishings and for the actual shrines, she sent for a number of skilled wood carvers from Shanghai and they worked in the dining room and in the garage at the Falls on the Peak. She explicitly told the workmen to be sure that each deity was smiling and that none looked fierce. On each side of the main altar table, in front of the "Three Precious Buddhas," there was a panel illustrating a famous Buddhist story. Back to back with the "Three Precious Buddhas" was a seated Kuan Yin and her attendants, with a similar altar table in front of them.

Halfway from a wide stairway leading to the main altar was a seven-storeyed pagoda five feet high, resting on a stand. Each storey contained seven Buddhist images, the whole structure being appropriately lit.

On one side of the main hall entrance was, and still is, a large bell, especially cast in Canton with the names of all the members of Mamma's family inscribed on its inner surface, and on the other side a huge drum. In the morning, for Buddhist services the bell is the first to be struck, while the drum is the last to be beaten at night.

On the ground floor are two other deities. Facing the main entrance is a Laughing Buddha whose smile cheers all who enter. And seated back to back with him is the "Wei T'o Bodhisattva" whose duty seems to be similar to that of a censor. It is said that if a monk goes out and breaks his vows of abstinence and vegetarianism by eating meat or drinking wine, when he passes this deity on his return, he will become sick and receive his due punishment from his monastery superiors. The deities represented in the temple are the main ones to be found in practically all of the larger and more famous Buddhist institutions in China. Mamma evidently wanted to reproduce the atmosphere she had found in her travels.

In the general decorative scheme equally great attention was paid to other details. She sent letters to friends and acquaintances who were both excellent calligraphers and well known people of the time, asking for samples of their writing. The scrolls or couplets they sent were then

carved in wood. Embroidered banners with appropriate wording were also sewn. She even ordered special hassocks from Shanghai made of coconut bark, on which to kneel.

She named the temple "Tung Lin Kok Yuen," the first word being Father's first name and the second and third her own Buddhist names. "Yuen" is a name often given to Buddhist institutions. It was formally opened on Buddha's Birthday, on May 10th, 1935. Into the temple were moved the Po Kok School and the Po Kok Buddhist Seminary; a library was established of Buddhist texts, and for the first few years the Yuen published a Buddhist periodical, called *The Lamp of the Sea of Men*, which was distributed free.



*Tung Lin Kok Yuen Buddhist Temple*

The School and the Seminary were only for girls. The Seminary students were in residence, and Mamma provided them with free board and lodging. Some of the teachers also lived in. There was a woman cook and an assistant, but the students were responsible for keeping the Yuen clean. It was always spotless. The seminary students also held regular

religious services several times each day. The school pupils had Buddhist classes twice a week and also took turns, class by class, in participating in the mid-day service, in much the same way as students in a Christian school study the Bible and attend church or chapel service.

On one side of the main hall, Mamma had a small suite of rooms built for the Superintendent of the Yuen, which she was until she died. It consisted of a small bedroom, a room with a wash basin, and a bathroom with toilet. She could, therefore, spend the night there or simply retire for a little rest or meditation. As time went on, she became proficient in sitting with crossed legs in the correct Buddhist posture



*Mamma sitting with crossed legs in  
Buddhist posture*

and she frequently meditated, which she found beneficial.

She never slackened in her daily worship and prayers. Even when she was travelling in Europe in 1927, she took along incense and a little silver box to serve as an incense stand. Every morning and evening she would place the stand near an open window, light one or three incense sticks (such was the custom, never the even numbers of two or four), do her obeisances, and say her prayers. In later years she was never seen without one of her rosaries—either the long one with 108 beads, or the short one with 18. As the result of frequent handling, the beads were shiny and bright. She maintained that one could pray “while walking, resting, sitting, or lying down.”

In building her temple and establishing the School and Seminary, she fulfilled her life's dream. She continued to spend much time and energy on the project, visiting it practically every day. She even drafted the rules and regulations for the various institutions, namely, the “Yuen,” the School and the Seminary; and as Principal of the school, handled much of its administrative work and supervised the selection of students.

When we were young, Mamma was somewhat concerned that if we went to a Christian school we might become Christians and abandon her religion. Her fear was fed by those Chinese Christians who prided themselves on having chopped up the family's ancestral tablets and burnt them as firewood. In the temple, she provided a room (which has now expanded to several) where families which could no longer conveniently give a place of honour to the tablets of their parents and ancestors, or ones that had become Christian, could store their ancestral tablets. Here every day, and especially on festivals, religious occasions or family anniversaries, incense and flowers, and sometimes fruit and vegetarian dishes, would be offered to the souls of the deceased.

Mamma never hesitated to contribute to deserving causes promoted by other faiths, especially for hospitals and schools. Moreover, when her three youngest daughters wanted to become Christians she did not stand in their way. Eddie married a Catholic and became one himself. My other siblings regard themselves either as Buddhists or Confucianists (or both). But all of us participate in the periodic religious services held in Mamma's memory, the Christian ones just not holding incense sticks as do the others.

In 1937, the evening before Mamma left Hong Kong to travel to Shanghai and Nanking, she sat up practically all night to write her Will. In fact she prepared two Wills, each dealing with different subjects. In one, she gave general instructions about the distribution of her worldly

possessions. Her jewelry, and other personal belongings she gave, as souvenirs, to various members of her family. Her stocks and shares and whatever money remained in her bank account were left to the temple and the school. In the other Will, she invited and urged a number of people to form themselves into a Board of Directors for the Tung Lin Kok Yuen and the Po Kok School, which she said were the crystallization of her life's wishes. Among these people were several of her religious friends, the heads of various Buddhist institutions, and three members of her family: my eldest brother-in-law, Sir Man Kam Lo; my younger brother, Shai Lai; and I. Finally she requested that her assistant, Miss Lam Ling-chun, succeed her as Superintendent of the Yuen.

We all felt that carrying out these requests was a duty to be discharged to the best of our ability since it involved the work which had meant so much to her.

The war in China worried Mamma very much and the suffering of the Chinese people brought her much pain. Her war work, done in addition to her normal duties, consumed much time and energy and her health began to show the effects of the strain.

One day in the winter of 1937 I was in the Hong Kong Sanatorium and Hospital to have my tonsils removed. Mamma and I looked out from the balcony and could see the beautiful yellow tiled roofs of her Tung Lin Kok Yuen. She told me that someone had advised her to have the roofs painted black, so they would not attract attention in case the Japanese bombed Hong Kong. We agreed that it would be a great pity to do so and probably not very effective. But her fear of the war's devastation remained.

## MAMMA'S MEDICAL INTERESTS

Mamma was always keenly interested in medical matters. Her sympathetic and observant character made her an ideal nurse. With such a large family, and a husband who was bedridden for part of his life, she became accustomed to caring for sick people.

In the early days of her marriage, Father used to read to her from books on Home Nursing, which interested both of them. Her interest in medicine must have been increased by her experiences with her first two sons. As I have already described, the eldest, Henry, died when he was twenty months old after only a fortnight's illness. The second son, Eddie, was ill from the time he was a few months old until he was about one and a half.

Mamma's proficiency as a nurse became so well-known that she would frequently be asked to help when a distant relative or friend was ill. She acted as interpreter if the doctor was a westerner, carried out his instructions, and supervised the nursing or even did it herself.

On these occasions, she sometimes became completely exhausted and would be laid up for a couple of days afterwards. If the patient had died, she often gave him or her the last bath and dressed the corpse in clean underclothes.

I remember once when a distant pseudo-relative,<sup>8</sup> a Eurasian named Lyson, died, Mamma asked, "Now, who is going to give him a bath?" When nobody offered, Mamma volunteered. I helped her with some of

<sup>8</sup> He was the grandson of a blind old lady, who was Mamma's "God-grandmother."

the work, and saw how capable and skilled she was. She knew how to tie the jaw so that it did not drop, and how to close the eyes properly, and she did these things quickly before rigor mortis set in, so that the body looked peaceful.

She was a kind and good nurse not only to her relatives and friends but often to very poor people of her acquaintance. When we were children, one of the amahs hemorrhaged very badly, a uterine hemorrhage. Mamma knew how to stop it and did. On another occasion, the eldest daughter of Mr. K'ang Yu Wei was expecting her first-born, and had been in labour for several days. When Mamma heard of the situation, she went to the home of the expectant mother and advised her how to lie in a position more conducive to the birth and how to relax. Pretty soon the baby was born. Apparently she knew midwifery too, although she was technically untrained.

Around 1930, when she herself was over fifty years old, she would occasionally hear that one of her Buddhist friends was ill in Castle Peak (a long way from where we lived on the other side of Hong Kong Harbour), or in some other out-of-the-way place. She would persuade either Dr. K.C. Yeo or Dr. Ho Chuen to make the trip with her. It was not then possible to reach Castle Peak by car, after crossing the harbour, so they went part of the way by car but had to do the rest by sampan (used as a water taxi). The sick person thus received expert medical attention, though by then Mamma was too busy to do the nursing herself. Such trips were often taken on a Sunday morning.

At other times she asked to be allowed to take part in the field trips of the St. John Ambulance Brigade medical teams on their visits to the villages. These fulfilled an important function as in those days rural clinics were few and far apart.

Those medical interests and activities remained part of her life till the very end. She was the Vice-Chairman of the Hong Kong Chinese National Women's Relief Association, which was active in raising funds and procuring medical and relief supplies for China during the early years of the Sino-Japanese War. The Association decided to spend some of the money it had raised to purchase surgical equipment to be sent to the war front. Six complete surgical units were ordered from abroad, including operating tables and the necessary ancillary equipment. It arrived packed in several large crates. Mamma felt she was responsible for the equipment and that it would be wise to have the contents carefully checked before sending the boxes onto China. She persuaded a young surgeon friend of hers, Dr. Li Shu-pui, to spend many late after-

noon and evening hours carefully going through everything to make sure all was in good order. This took place just a few weeks before she died.

When any of us had to have surgery, or went through childbirth, Mamma asked the doctors to allow her to put on a white gown and mask, scrub up with them and watch the operation or the delivery. In 1937 my tonsils had to be removed because they were badly infected. Mamma felt that the same Dr. Li Shu-pui was the best surgeon to perform the operation, and obtained his consent to watch it. When the bill eventually came, I kidded Dr. Li that the operation was quite expensive. He explained that it had been a difficult operation, and jokingly added that it had been done "under your mother's personal supervision."

Mamma had another very good friend who was a physician, Dr. G. H. Thomas, a Eurasian whose Chinese name was Tam Ga-Szi, the Superintendent of the Tung Wah Hospital. In those days, the first decades of this century, most Chinese did not trust hospital care and many did not go to one until they were terminal cases. In fact, many patients died so soon after they entered that the doctors had no chance to make a positive diagnosis. In those cases, and when corpses were picked up in the streets, Dr. Thomas had to perform post-mortems before he could make out the death certificates. Sometimes Mamma persuaded him to allow her to watch as he performed these post-mortems.

She valued these medical experiences so much that she encouraged us in similar activities. In 1918 Eva and I were in secondary school studying, among other subjects, physiology and hygiene. The teacher had already aroused our interest by bringing to class the lungs, eyes, brains, and other organs of various animals. Dr. Thomas heard about this and offered to allow our whole class to go to his hospital to watch him do an autopsy on a baby. We were very grateful for the opportunity and the girls were most interested.

Mamma's interest in and knowledge of things medical won her the friendship of both the European and the Western-trained Chinese doctors in Hong Kong. She understood their professional vocabulary and could discuss medical subjects with them intelligently. When she was nursing a sick friend or relative she could give such clear accounts of the illness that the doctors felt that they had a real ally, one they could depend on to carry out their instructions exactly.

In addition to the illnesses of her two sons and her husband, Mamma also had to struggle with the long illness of my eldest sister, Victoria. This first-born child of Mamma's had been a real assistant and companion to her and was probably the favourite, if she had one,

amongst the daughters. In February, 1919, Victoria gave birth to her first child, Gwendolin. In those days it was still customary, even in wealthy families, for babies to be born at home if proper facilities could be arranged. Mamma spared no pains in the preparations, and with the full co-operation of Victoria's husband arranged for one of the best obstetricians to be in attendance, as well as an Australian-trained Eurasian midwife.

Unfortunately, the third day after she was born, the baby developed white spots in her mouth and both Mamma and Victoria were greatly worried. The condition disappeared in about a week, but by then Victoria was ill, possibly from anxiety.

Victoria's illness worried Mamma exceedingly. She had, of course, been staying with Victoria because of the childbirth, and just a few days before Victoria became ill, she asked Eva and me to stay there as well in case our help was needed. I can still see Mamma coming into our room the morning after the onset of Victoria's illness to tell us that they had hardly slept that night. Mamma's head looked as if powder had been sprinkled over it—the dark gray hair seemed to have become much whiter overnight.

During the subsequent weeks and months, Mamma requested virtually every well known doctor in the Colony to examine Victoria and diagnose the case. She also asked Uncle Ho Kom Tong and another expert herbal doctor to use their methods of diagnosis and treatment. Finally she heard that a famous American gynaecologist was passing through Hong Kong, and she arranged for him to examine Victoria. She gave him such a full and clear report of the case that the doctor was clearly impressed. He suggested that the cause might have been auto-intoxication during childbirth, and that the nervous symptoms were no doubt the result of prolonged anxiety.

Victoria was often unconscious for long periods and Mamma became desperate. In those days there were not many wonder drugs, but what was available and appropriate they tried. Finally, change of environment was suggested. So Victoria was moved around, first from one room to another in her own house and then up to Father's house, the Neuk, on the Peak as the weather was getting warmer and the Peak air is cooler and fresher than that of the town. Eventually Mamma put her in the Peak Hospital and obtained permission to stay with her.

In due course, Father returned from a trip to America. He asked Mamma, "Why don't you take her away for a change? You remember when Eddie was a child and he was sick we took him for a change of

climate and he improved so much. The Summer is coming on; maybe if you take her away it will be good for her health."

I remember Mamma telling Victoria, "We are taking you away for a change." Victoria had some conscious moments; it seemed that she understood the message. As a result, her periods of unconsciousness gradually diminished and she became more cheerful every day. We arranged for two Chinese trained nurses to travel with us, and because both Eva and I had finished secondary school, we went along.

Fortunately Victoria's husband, M.K., was also able to join us for a few weeks. So Mamma, M.K., Victoria, Eva, and myself, the two Chinese nurses and two Chinese servants, all set off together on a Butterfield coastal boat to Tsingtau. We were taking Victoria to consult Dr. Paul Weischer, whom my parents had known previously. He had delivered Mamma's youngest child, Florence, in Tsingtau four years earlier in 1915.

I can clearly remember Victoria being taken onto the boat. She was, of course, not able to walk, so she had to be carried on a stretcher from the Peak Hospital down to the Peak Tram which went very slowly, so as not to jolt her too much, and then to the waterfront where we boarded a launch which took us to the steamer anchored in the harbour. Some of the relatives and friends who came to see us off must have felt as if they were going to her funeral. I remember saying to myself, "I hope and pray that Victoria will recover—not only for her own sake, but because I know how devoted Mamma is to her. If her life cannot be saved I do not dare to think what Mamma might do."

Even before we got to Shanghai the daily periods of consciousness lasted longer and longer. While we were anchored near Shanghai, Mamma arranged to have a European physician come to the boat to see the patient. Victoria was definitely improving and the doctor felt that she was out of danger. A few days later we arrived in Tsingtau, and Mamma had Dr. Weischer book a room at the Faber Hospital (the Faberkrankenhaus). It had been built by the Germans when Tsingtau was a German Colony. The Chinese name for it was Fu P'a Yi Yuan.

Dr. Weischer confirmed the opinion of the Shanghai doctor that Victoria was recovering. All of us stayed in the hospital for a few days. Then Dr. Weischer was able to arrange for the British Consul, a Mr. Eckford, to rent us his house. The consul's wife and children had gone to Pei-Tai-Ho, a seaside resort, for the summer and the Consul himself went to live at his Club.

It was a lovely house and I remember it well. It had two storeys;

the bedrooms were upstairs, and the ground floor included a dining room and a sitting room. We had a very capable cook, a native Shantung man who spoke some pidgin English, good enough for kitchen use. He employed an unsalaried second cook who, in return for doing the dirty work, received "English" lessons from the first cook!

Victoria recovered steadily. My main job was to keep the medical records: the hours she slept, what she ate, her bodily functions, etc. She had been stretched out in bed for so long that when she first started to walk she had to learn to put her heels on to the ground again and to bend her ankles properly. She also had to learn to stand up straight. Dr. Weischer was exceedingly patient and he and Mamma, sometimes with one of the nurses, took her round and round in her bedroom helping her to walk properly again.

Soon Victoria was well enough for her husband to return to his law practice in Hong Kong and later for Mamma and Eva to leave for a few days to visit a well known "sacred" mountain, Lau Shan. Even after travelling several months longer on Dr. Weischer's advice, Victoria's convalescence was slow and even after our return to Hong Kong, Victoria stayed in our home on the Peak for some time before returning to her family.

Mamma's skill and patience in nursing was probably put to its hardest test when Father was ill for so many years while we children were quite small, and Mamma was in her thirties. I have vivid memories of this period, both from what I learnt first-hand and from what Mamma often told us about it. Father had suffered from bad digestive problems most of his life, because, I believe it was later discovered, his stomach produced an inadequate amount of hydrochloric acid which meant that he could not digest ordinary food properly. He was also such a very light sleeper that he suffered from insomnia. His condition deteriorated so much that from 1910 to 1913 he was mostly bedridden; and his emaciation progressed so far that although he was about five foot six inches tall, he was said to have weighed only sixty-eight pounds. There are photos taken of him soon after he began to recover, and in them he looks like a skeleton with skin stretched over it.

He slept so little at night that he often had to rest and try to sleep during the day. When he was preparing for this, a servant went round the house ringing a little bell warning the household to be extra quiet. Mamma generally read to him, as her voice could lull him to sleep. Quite often she would read one of the "singing stories" which she had read years earlier and of which he was fond. Sometimes Mother, or his nurse,

Miss Katie, would do the reading. The nurse would often read articles from English newspapers, such as the *South China Morning Post*, but because he sometimes looked at the papers himself, they had to be carefully scanned beforehand. If there was anything that might upset him, the passage would first be cut out of the paper.

He was so delicate and easily upset that Mamma tried all sorts of devices to make him comfortable. When his sheets had to be changed, the twin beds in his room were placed side by side, and Mamma, assisted by the nurse, and other members of his staff, would lift him up in the sheet on which he was sleeping, place him on the second bed, have his own bed made up fresh, and then lift him back again before taking away the used sheet.

After Mamma had read him to sleep, she would slip out of the room, prepare his next meal, and go to say her prayers.

With his very poor digestion, the only food which seemed to agree with him was a powder, produced by a firm in England, known as the Revalenta Arabicca Food. The powder had to be mixed with water and a little salt and then boiled into a kind of gruel. Father, understandably, became fussy about his food. He would complain if the gruel was a little too thick or too thin, too salty or not salty enough. In order to please him, Mamma used to measure the powder and the salt exactly, put in the correct quantity of water from a measuring cup, and time the cooking period carefully with a watch, stirring the dish all the while.

After she had completed her chores for the day, Mamma would try to sleep herself, but many a night she could only snatch two or three hours before Father was awake again and asking for her. As a devoted wife and nurse, she never showed displeasure or impatience. He probably stayed alive and regained his health thanks to the care she gave and supervised.

One of Mamma's devices amused us as children and I have often mentioned it to friends who I thought might find it useful. Father realized that it was not good for him to be so easily upset, and he tried to cure himself of this bad habit. Mamma encouraged him in this and had a sort of apron made for him, with three pockets in the front. The side pockets had red peas in one and black peas in the other, while the middle pocket was empty at the start of each day. If something displeased him or went wrong and Father took it calmly, he placed a red pea in the central pocket, but if he lost his temper, he placed a black one there instead. At the end of the day a count was made of the red peas and black peas. The difference between them showed whether he

had been good-tempered that day.

He used various other devices to guard his health and promote a full recovery. When he started trying to eat other foods, someone advised him to chew each bite a hundred times. He often really counted and tried to reach that number. He weighed himself at least once a day and took his own pulse or had it taken for him. These data were recorded in a diary, which he kept conscientiously.

Father also suffered considerably from flatulence, but he and Mamma were very observant of his food and could tell which foods were apt to cause this and which would not. As his health improved he appeared at a family meal on special occasions, attended dinner parties at Government House or had friends in for tea, but he seldom ate anything on these occasions. His interest was in the fellowship, not the food. He used to say that when people became civilized they would not have afternoon tea which, he felt, was "an insult to the lunch and an injury to the supper."

Because I had had most of the childhood ailments, I sampled a good deal of Mamma's excellent nursing. I learnt to appreciate thoroughly her sympathetic understanding and her efficient techniques. I remember that I woke early unless I was ill, but that Eva generally slept later. Consequently if I found on awakening that Eva had already got out of bed, I would be frightened, fearing that I was sick again, and I might even start weeping. If Mamma heard me, she would come in and say, "What is the matter, my dear child?" and she might carry me "pick-a-back" to her room. Soon I would be soothed even if it turned out, as it sometimes did, that I was indeed ill.

Whenever one of us was ill we would be put to sleep on Mamma's bed, which was usually two twin beds put together, and it was a privilege to sleep there. She noticed almost immediately if there was something wrong with us physically or mentally. She made us kiss her a number of times each day—when we first saw her in the morning, just before going out or upon coming home, and when we said goodnight.

She always noticed if something was troubling one of us; we could not hide it from her. She would ask casually "What news do you have?" and often we could not help blurting out the truth. It was difficult for her to keep track of her large family, especially as she spent so much time helping relatives and friends who were ill or had other troubles, and visiting the older ones.

One hot summer's day, when Mamma was in her late thirties, one of the servants came to Mamma and said, "Madam, you are always

interested in doing kind deeds. There is a British soldier dying outside. Perhaps you would like to go and have a look at him." Mamma immediately went out to the end of our entrance path where it joined the main road leading down to Aberdeen. There a soldier was lying in the shade of a tree, with a companion who had been left behind to keep him company. They had been on a route march, and the young soldier, evidently not used to the tropical sun, could not march any more and had probably fainted. The summer heat in Hong Kong can be exceedingly trying, sometimes exceeding 95° Fahrenheit, with the humidity well over 90%.

Mamma decided that the soldier was suffering from sun stroke and sent for ice, towels, cushions, and other items needed for the prescribed treatment. After some time he revived, and she sent him back to his barracks in her private sedan chair.

Some days later the soldier returned to our home with a note addressed to Mamma from his commanding officer, thanking her for the timely, kind, and efficient treatment the soldier had been given and wishing that more of his own countrywomen were as public-spirited as Mamma in helping those in distress.



*Mamma at the Peak, around early 1920.*



## OUR FAMILY TRAVELS

Of our three parents, I believe Mamma was the one most fond of travelling. In her book about visiting the famous mountains of China, she described her travels from 1891 when her father went from Shanghai to his customs post in Kiu Kiang. He died the following year, and his family returned to Hong Kong.

Four months after she married Father in 1895, she went with him on a nine month trip to Japan and America. A few months after her mother-in-law's death in 1896, as I have already described, the whole family went to Ting Hu Mountain, in nearby Kwangtung province to hold religious services honouring the recently deceased and other ancestors.

From time to time she went to Macao to stay in our house there and after Henry died in 1900, Father, who had already arranged to go with Mother to England, asked Mamma to join them.

In 1902, after Eddie was born, Mamma went with Father to Japan but returned to Hong Kong when she received a telegram saying that Eddie was ill. She travelled widely in Japan, enjoying the scenery, the people and the cultural and religious sites. She was much impressed by the high literacy rate in Japan where even the rickshaw pullers, while waiting for customers, would often be seen reading a newspaper. This contrasted with conditions in China and Hong Kong, where, at that time, 80 to 90 per cent of the ordinary working people were illiterate.

On the 31st of August, 1908, Father, his two wives, Victoria, Eddie and several members of their staff went to the United States. At first Father stayed in the German Hospital in San Francisco where he

was looked after by a Dr. Herstein, who had attended him during an earlier visit. After several weeks in the hospital, they rented a house at 3382 Clay Street, San Francisco (now in the early 1970's, the building is still standing). Mother returned to Hong Kong first, with her companion Miss Hartshorne. Mamma, Victoria and Eddie stayed on with Father.

In 1913 Father took Mamma to North China, along with Victoria, Eddie and Robbie. While there, Father dislocated his hip joint, a most painful experience, from which it took him months to recover. In 1914, Mamma took the whole family for a long summer holiday in Shanhaikwan, the easternmost end of the Great Wall on the Gulf of Chihli. The previous year she had heard of an empty temple, which she was told would be the only available accommodation there, and rented it for our family.

When my parents travelled, they took along, if possible, everything they thought they might need, so there was always a great deal of baggage. For instance, months prior to our departure for Shanhaikwan, large wooden boxes were put in the enclosed verandah of one of our houses on the Peak and Mamma, Victoria, and some of the servants started packing. First they put in a variety of foodstuffs: dried mushrooms, dried shrimps, dried vegetables, dates, and other Chinese goodies packed first in large biscuit tins or Horlicks malted milk bottles and then wrapped and stored carefully in the packing crates. As each crate was filled, it was nailed, strapped, labelled, and numbered. An inventory was made of all the baggage of which there were more than a hundred pieces! We even took an upright piano with us, because Mamma did not want us to neglect our musical education during the holiday.

We had reserved the one cabin available both in the first and second classes of the Jardine coastal steamer S.S. "Cheung Shing." The vessel was commanded by a Captain Liddell, who became a good friend of ours. The captain had hammocks rigged for Robbie and Jean on the deck outside his cabin, but took them inside when the weather turned bad. The Compradore of the ship (i.e. the person in charge of the Chinese crew and of trade with the Chinese) very kindly lent us his cabin as well, while he doubled up somewhere else. Some in our group had to share berths.

Unfortunately Robbie developed a fever of 105° F before we reached Weihaiwei, a port on the tip of the Shantung Peninsula. Mamma was able to bring the fever down within twenty-four hours and thus avoid our being quarantined. At Shanhaikwan, Eva and I were sent to

the British Army Headquarters to ask an army doctor to examine Robbie. Eddie had had to wait for his summer holiday and was to have come with Father from Hong Kong to join us in Shanhaikwan, while the rest of the family went ahead. Mamma's brother had gone to North China earlier, so he joined us en route. His two sons had been staying with us in Hong Kong and, of course, came along. Our "Old Master" came too, as did a Chinese Secretary-cum-Governess, "Miss Leung the third Aunt," and many household servants.

The year 1911 brought the Ching Dynasty to an end and during the accompanying disturbances soldiers had thrown the temple's Buddhist statues into a nearby river. Because of this desecration, the buildings were empty.

The temple was near the Gulf of Chihli and from one corner of the compound we could see whether the water was right for a pre-breakfast swim. If the sea looked inviting, we would ride to the beach on donkeys. If it didn't, we would take a donkey ride on the nearby Great Wall, and sometimes race each other on it, as it was indeed wide enough. After our morning ride or swim, we had breakfast. Screened windows and doors do not exist in temple buildings, so we had to



*Daisy, Victoria, Mamma, Eva  
and Robbie at the beach of  
Shanhaikwan, Summer 1914.*

launch a campaign against the flies and kill as many as we could before we uncovered the food and ate. We had wire mesh covers for everything, but even so we joked that occasionally a fly would be baked into the bread. The place also had many scorpions, and some of the servants got bitten.

After breakfast the "Old Master" gave us lessons. Empty packing cases were the desks and we had several hours' schooling each morning. After our afternoon naps, there were English lessons with Mamma's brother, who taught us to read *Robinson Crusoe*. Some practiced on the piano, or gave music lessons to the younger ones; I often took dictation (in English) when Mamma wanted to write to Father, brought the draft to Victoria to correct and finally copied it out for Mamma's signature. She felt this was good English language practice. At other times she wrote to him in Chinese or asked Miss Leung to do it for her.

We visited places of interest in the area, which was served by a small-gauge trolley car, but our usual conveyance was a donkey, sometimes two riding on one together, with the owner running alongside.

The young men who tended the donkeys seemed a happy and cheerful group. They learned our routine and would come early in the morning and in the afternoon, urging us to go for a ride. Mamma must have paid them generously, as they came back each day and would often suggest interesting historic spots in the neighbourhood which we could visit. One such interesting landmark was the grave of the famous widow, Meng Chiang, whose husband had been conscripted to work on the Great Wall and had not returned many years later. She went there to look for him, and, on learning that he had died, she committed suicide. The local villagers buried her there.

It was a wonderful summer and we were thoroughly enjoying it when suddenly World War I broke out. Father and Eddie couldn't join us, and on the voyage home we had to put out all the ship's lights and at most were allowed to use candles. German submarines were in the waters nearby and Captain Liddell must have felt relieved when he brought the ship safely into Hong Kong harbour.

In 1916 Mamma started her trips to famous Chinese Buddhist institutions and to the sacred Chinese mountains. She spent three months in the lower Yangtze area, accompanied by Miss Lam, a female cousin of Mamma's who lived in Shanghai, and a few servants. Among the monasteries she visited in 1916, some of which she revisited in subsequent years, were ones on the Putu Mountain near Ting Hai; on an island opposite Ningpo, a port at the estuary of the Yangtze Kiang;

on the Tien Tung and Yu Wang, also called Or Yu Wang Mountains, both near Ningpo; on the Chiu Hwa Mountain near the town of Chin-kiang in Kiangsu province; and on the Lu<sup>9</sup> and Li Mountains both near her former home in the town of Kiukiang, which is just within the border of the Kiangsi province. Because her pilgrimages brought her so near to where her father had died, she tried to look up two older men who had been exceedingly kind to her family at that time. She found that one of them had died, but the other was delighted to see her again and received her hospitably.

She also went to Hangchow and visited the West Lake and other well known or historic places in the area. Upon her return she gave us vivid descriptions of her travels and brought back many relics and souvenirs, as well as literature about the places she visited. She requested our old teacher, Mr. Chiu, to prepare a first draft of her *Travelogue*. This was not published until the 1930's, after many revisions by our next home tutor, Mr. Leung and by religious and scholarly friends of hers. In China, it is not unusual to ask an expert scholar to do the writing, while the person under whose name the book is to be published supplies the information. The writing of good Chinese is so difficult that the practice is not looked on askance.

In 1919 while Victoria was convalescing in Tsingtao, Mamma and Eva visited the neighbouring sacred mountain of Lau Shan, to enjoy the scenery and see the famous Taoist and Buddhist monasteries there. Later, all four of us went to Tsinan Fu, capital of Shangtung province. From Tsinan Fu we took rickshaws to the bridge that crosses the Yellow River near the city. It was a terribly hot day. When we got to the bridge, there was a peddler selling watermelons. Since we were all thirsty, Mamma had the man cut one for us. It was so hot that even the inside pulp of the melon was warm, but we were thirsty and ate it with gusto. Unfortunately, on our way back to the city we had "tummy aches" followed by diarrhoea. It might have been due to the overheated melons, dirt on the peddler's knife, or the ever-present flies. In any event, we were not allowed thereafter to eat fruit except the sort which we could peel whole.

From Tsinan Fu we took a side trip to Ch'u-fu, the home of

9 In the Lu Mountains is the famous summer resort of Kuling which is a favourite spot for people to escape the damp heat of Nanking, Shanghai or other places of the lower Yangtze basin.

Confucius, which is the English corruption of "K'ung fu-tzu," meaning "the Master K'ung," a form of address for the sage whose name was K'ung Ch'iu. We went both to his tomb and to his temple. The temple of Confucius is most impressive. A wooden statue of Confucius seated is in the centre, flanked on either side by statues of his disciples and successors. We also went to the family home of his descendants, who have the hereditary title of Yen Shing Kung.<sup>10</sup> The senior lineal descendant in every generation succeeds to the title and it is his duty to look after the religious services in Confucius' temple. Naturally Mamma wanted to call on whoever was then the family representative of the Sage. We were told that the last Yen Shing Kung had died recently, and his widow was pregnant. Mamma told me to write on one of her visiting cards that we were from Hong Kong and would be very grateful if Madame K'ung would grant us an interview.

Of course, 1919 was the year of the "May 4th Movement," when Chinese students and scholars protested the terms of the Treaty of Versailles as they related to China. At the same time, a number of reformers advocated modernising the Chinese written language. Unfortunately, the reformers tended to blame what they (and many others) didn't like about Chinese traditions and customs on Confucius and Confucian ethics. In conservative Hong Kong, however, those who pursued Chinese learning still honoured and respected Confucius, and Mamma had all her life regarded Confucius as the Sage. She felt about visiting Ch'u-fu as a devout Christian would feel about going to Jerusalem. It was an even greater privilege to be able to call on Madame K'ung, since she was a representative of the K'ung family.

Madame K'ung graciously consented to see us. Mamma thanked her for allowing us to call on her and spoke of her great respect for the Sage and his family. She told Madame K'ung that educated people in Hong Kong were devoted followers of Confucius and that she was particularly dedicated, hence the special trip from Tsingtao and Tsinan Fu. Madame K'ung seemed impressed. At the end of the visit, Eva took a photograph of her and her little daughter.

10 This is the title of a dukedom first established in the Han dynasty (B.C. 220-A.D. 206) for the senior lineal descendant of Confucius. The exact title has changed several times over the dynasties. In 1935 because the feudal ranks had been abolished, the Republic changed the title of "duke" to that of an official responsible for the memorial ceremonies for Confucius. Our visit was made in 1919, before the title was changed.



*The mother and elder sister of Yen Shing Kung,  
the descendant of Confucius, taken by Eva  
at Ch'u-fu in 1919.*

Mamma also took us to the T'ai Shan, the highest of China's famous mountains within the eighteen provinces of China proper. Looking up from its foot, the mountain seemed high and majestic. We rented four mountain chairs which were used to carry visitors up the hill. There were three bearers to each chair, but instead of all three working at the same time, as was done in Hong Kong, two carried the chair while the third just walked by himself and rested. Periodically the third bearer relieved one of the other two. This was done without the chair being set down—the third man just slipped in somehow. Instead of the bearers carrying the poles on their shoulders, a long leather strap was attached to each end of the poles, and each bearer carried the

middle portion of this strap on one of his shoulders. The chair was thus supported both by these leather straps and by the bearers' hands grasping the poles. As most of the path consisted of long series of wide steps, the chair had to be taken up sideways, parallel to the steps. This, fortunately for the riders, reduced the feeling of height.

Every now and then a bearer would decide to change the shoulder the strap was on and would give the other bearer a signal. The change was quickly made while the bearers almost seem to run for a few steps. It was quite scary until we became used to it.

Mamma had told the bearers to take their time, as we were not in a hurry. So every time we came to a little temple or a tea house, the bearers set us down and suggested that we all have tea. Along the way there were many good inscriptions, in stone usually, of poems and other writings. Sometimes these were so well done that ink rubbings had been made of them and were offered for sale. Mamma, unable to resist either cultural relics or good calligraphy, bought many of them.

As we neared the top of the hill in front of us, another tier of hills rose beyond. Soon it became obvious that there were still more and more tiers, until, after some eight hours of travelling, we finally reached the top. Eva and I walked part of the way, but Victoria and Mamma walked very little. All along the route, there were devout worshippers walking all the way up as on a pilgrimage.

There were some trees on the mountain but there was much bare rock. Along the way there were many lovely vistas and waterfalls, and places which had been the scenes of historical incidents. At one point there were five huge old pines that had been named the "Five Officials". We were told that one of the emperors had conferred this honourable title on the five trees. Most of the trees we passed were evergreens, especially above a certain altitude, though on the lower slopes there were other trees too. The temperature dropped steadily as we ascended.

At the very top, a Taoist monastery served as an inn for travellers. We were asked whether we wanted to be awakened to see the sunrise, and, of course, Mamma said yes. So at about 2:30 a.m. we were awakened! We thought it rather early, but the priests assured us there was little time to spare and we were advised to dress as warmly as we could. Soon after we got outside the monastery, the underside of the clouds in the east lit up with a reddish-orange glow, and gradually all the rivers and lakes glistened with light. The Yellow River (the Huang Ho) looked like a long white tape curling across the floor below. We could see hundreds of lakes, which looked like so many little puddles.

Shortly a red dot appeared in the east, and we were told that this was the sun coming up. In a few moments, it became a red line; and suddenly it seemed to jump up and we could see a ball of red fire. It was a sight never to be forgotten! We stayed in the monastery for two nights and fortunately there were beautiful sunrises on both mornings. Sometimes, we were told, it is so cloudy that visitors might stay for several days and never see a sunrise at all.

After visiting Tsinan Fu, Ch'u-fu, and the T'ai Shan, we returned to Tsingtao. We then went to Shanghai and up the Yangtze River to visit more Buddhist monasteries—the Chin Shan temple in Chinkiang, and the Tien Tung and Yu Wang temples, all well known for their religious traditions. We spent a few days at Hangchow's West Lake—renowned for its beauty; and stayed about a month at the Putu Shan monastery. The High Priest there was Mamma's Buddhist tutor and spent part of every day explaining the intricacies of Buddhism to her. While there she arranged for a series of prayers to be said for the ancestors of the Ho and Cheung families. Some of these prayer sessions would last for several hours each day and go on for a week or more. The priests would read from various Buddhist scriptures, either in Sanskrit (transliterated into Chinese) or in Chinese. Parts of prayers were sung, and we learned one of the more famous short tunes.

The atmosphere at Putu Shan was peaceful and we had a restful month. We remained until the heat of the Summer was over, and returned to Hong Kong before the Chung Yeung Festival, on the 9th day of the 9th moon, which usually occurs in early October. Whenever Mamma went away for the Summer, she generally planned to return about that time as she was always anxious to participate in the rites performed at the ancestral graves on the Chung Yeung and Ching Ming Memorial Days.

After Mamma's extensive trip to Buddhist monasteries in 1916 and her travels with us in 1919, her already deep interest in Buddhism was further stimulated. In 1923 some monks from the monastery on the Ch'i Hsia Mountain near Nanking and from the Bamboo Grove Temple near Chinkiang spent some time preaching in Hong Kong and were returning to their monasteries. Mamma left Hong Kong with them, visited both groups in their home bases and also went to other famous Buddhist monasteries in the Yangtze area. She was away three months on this trip.

In 1924 Mamma took my brother Shai Lai (Robbie) to Nanking, where he hoped to enter a Chinese military academy. Unfortunately,

they found that it had been closed. But Mamma was able to take her son to visit the Ch'i Hsia Temple near Nanking. Later Shai Lai went to England for military training at the Woolwich Military Academy. He continued his military studies at Fontainebleau in France and at Fort Leavenworth in the United States. He eventually became a General in the Chinese Nationalist Army and for some years represented the Chinese United Nations Delegation on the UN's Military Commission.

While I was at Teachers College my parents went again to North China. They travelled first to Shanghai, then to Dairen, Mukden and T'ai Yuan Fu, the capital city of Shansi province. At the end of the trip Mamma was able to fulfill one of her fondest hopes by visiting the famous Buddhist temples at Wu T'ai Shan—The Mountain with Five Platforms, in Shansi province. The main temple here is dedicated to the worship of the Bodhisattva Wen Hsu.

In her *Travelogue*, Mamma gives a very detailed description of this trip, one aspect of which made her particularly happy: Father volunteered to travel with her in spite of the anticipation of a strenuous journey, and during their stay in the Buddhist monasteries he ate only vegetarian food as is expected of visitors residing in any Buddhist institution. At the time of their visit, the bridge at Yang Ming Bao was out, so the motor road was impassable and they travelled part of the way by mule cart.

The local war lord, Marshal Yen Hsi Shan, provided them with a bodyguard of six mounted soldiers, presumably a necessary precaution for a wealthy and distinguished visitor. The first day they started very early, travelled six hours by car, rested for two hours, and then went another four hours by mule cart, arriving at their destination for the day at 6:00 p.m. The district magistrate entertained them at dinner, and they left again by mule cart the following morning at 8 o'clock, travelling another long day until 7:00 p.m. On the third day, they again started at 8:00 a.m. and finally reached "The Mountain with Five Platforms," the Wu T'ai Shan, where they spent several days.

The scenery must have been majestic; Mamma was most enthusiastic in her description of the winding roads, the steep cliffs, and the feeling of being in the clouds. Going up the steeper grades from the foot of the mountain range they used mountain chairs, and Mamma relates how Father was most impressed by the scenery, frequently asking the chair bearers to set him down so that he could admire it, whereas she was impatient to reach their destination. This was for her a religious pilgrimage she had looked forward to for many decades.

They spent considerable time on Wu T'ai Shan, visiting the temple on each "platform" on separate days, asking the monks there to conduct religious services in memory of our grandparents, and taking in the beauty of the surroundings. The main temple had been built in A.D. 1407 during the Ming Dynasty, and was rebuilt in 1579. In the main monastery, there were over a hundred Buddhist monks and more than twenty Lamaist monks. On leaving, Mamma expressed the wish some day to revisit Wu T'ai Shan as there were many sacred and beautiful spots they had been unable to see.

In December, 1929, accompanied by her seventh daughter, Grace,



*Mamma in Indian costume, 1925.*

Mamma went on the last pilgrimage of her life, a trip to India. They first went to Calcutta and then visited famous Buddhist shrines in India, made a trip to the Ganges, and in Burma where they saw the Golden Pagoda in Rangoon.

In 1932 Father and Mother went to Europe for their Golden Honeymoon and took me along as their secretary. The first part of the journey was by boat, and on our walks around the deck, Father told me that I must arrange to take him up in an aeroplane, in the same way that I had taken Mamma. I told him this might not be easy, as Mother would be strongly opposed to any such project. Occasionally he felt her out on the subject but she condemned the idea each time, asking him if he thought he had already lived too long.

A couple of months after we landed and were settled in London's Park Lane Hotel, Father noticed in the newspaper that the Graf Zeppelin had been taking passengers for short rides over London and other parts of England. He was sorry to have missed such an opportunity. A few days later he called me into his bedroom after lunch (he had his meals in his room, as he generally lived on yoghurt and a special diet), and told me that he read in the papers the Graf Zeppelin was again offering to take passengers up. He wanted me to find out more about it. With the help of the Head Porter of the hotel, we got the details: it would cost ten guineas per person (US\$52.50 at the 1932 exchange rate) and another ten guineas for the car to enter the enclosed area. Mother had promised to go out that afternoon with Eva to have tea with Lloyd George's son-in-law who was the superintendent of a hospital. This was fortunate for Father, as Mother was out of the way and could not prevent him from taking the trip. I pointed out that I had already arranged for Grace and a friend, Dr. Yue Man-Kwong, to help me with my accumulated secretarial duties, and Father immediately invited them to go with us.

As we would probably not be back when Mother returned from her tea party, we left her a note so that she would not worry about us. Father told me to write that we were going to look at the Graf Zeppelin, and as it was a good distance out of town we might be late in returning. When we reached the landing field, a charabanc took us to the dirigible and we found that instead of it being anchored in the normal way, a hundred Boy Scouts had been given what must have been a rare privilege in those days, namely to anchor the airship by holding on to ropes attached to its sides. As we approached the huge cigar-shaped object,

Father turned to me, saying, "To see this is already worth half the money." We entered the dirigible cabin and some newspaper reporters recognized Father in his long Chinese gown, short black jacket, and skull cap. They persuaded him to be photographed standing at the entrance to the dirigible. The following morning the picture appeared in the paper and we realized that Dr. Eckner, the pilot and a famous flier, was standing behind Father.



*Father standing at the entrance of the Graf Zeppelin, in London 1932, with the captain, Dr. Eckner behind him on his right.*

The trip was memorable. The airship was steady and flew low so that we could see all the landmarks of London. I knew London well, having been a student there between 1927 and 1929. I pointed out the

Park Lane Hotel to Father and said that Mother was probably looking up at the Zeppelin. The amah told us later that Mother read our note when she returned and when she saw the airship, pointed to it and said, "He says he has gone to look at it. I am sure he is up there in it." She knew him well.

After we landed we phoned the hotel, but neither Mother nor the amah was in her room. So I asked the reception clerk to find Lady Ho Tung and tell her that Sir Robert had been up in the Zeppelin, had enjoyed the trip, and would be back in London in another hour or so. This was Father's way of breaking the news to her for he knew that Mother would be furious with him. So as soon as he got out of the hotel elevator, he turned to Mother and said, "Dear, I am very tired, so please excuse me. I am going to bed." I saw him into his room. He held my hand with both of his, just as a child might do, and said: "Thank you for taking me up." I said, "Thank you for taking us." He was dead tired but very happy.

In 1937 the Chinese Government invited Father to visit the then capital Nanking, in order to see an Industrial Exhibition there and perhaps to invest in China's industrial development. When he reached Shanghai, he wrote home asking Mamma to join him.

In Nanking they were received by Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek, Dr. Sun Fo (Sun Yat-sen's son who was then a high official of the Chinese National Government), Dr. Wang Shih Cheh (the Minister of Education) and many others.

The Sino-Japanese War broke out on the 7th of July that year, so that travelling for any distance in China became difficult. But Mamma continued to take frequent short trips to Macao until within a few days of her final illness and death. She had established a charity school there for girls from poor families, the first Po Kok Free School, started even before the one in Hong Kong. She herself acted as Headmistress for both schools, and practically every weekend she went to Macao to attend to the school's administration.

Normally the four-hour ferry trip to Macao is a relaxing experience and the sea air was good for her. This was, of course, long before the speedy hydrofoil boats used today. Unfortunately, in order to save time she often returned on the night boat to Hong Kong which did not sail until two o'clock in the morning. Even if she were asleep by then, the noise of the embarking passengers and the starting of the ship's engines would invariably wake her up, and it would be difficult for her to go back to sleep. Hence she would have slept little when the boat

arrived in Hong Kong soon after six o'clock; but instead of resting she would immediately start on her round of activities.

These last short trips, consequently, had the opposite effect on her that travelling usually had. Normally travel cheered and invigorated her, it inspired her and gave her strength and ideas. But during the last months and weeks of her life, her general health was very much run down. She nonetheless did too much. These night trips from Macao were among the straws that broke the camel's back.

國以守舊不更信之故遂至危殆民  
心不保耗矣哀哉僕頻上書請安  
速也

主洞達萬國審通暗差大半新法  
掃二千年之積弊仍仿朝那拉  
長和守舊擾亂恬惟乃敢此廢  
主上天地反覆惟此佐佳新密受

八帶大為所忌欲加速捕英因反  
以保護的還途中

君此生夙懷慷慨愛憤國事  
曾著拙學欲為宏衛國之難報  
以自任遣陳君啟榮以求吾家兄以  
繼以極吾館以全家累君為吾安

凡人既志上則過于吾之自謀遂  
來此師焉忘不旅亡嗚呼忠賢之際  
臣親朋友之有遠近都願者  
君乃獨仗義相倚仰儒林有主骨肉  
其遠懷鄉後古之義士名神成舍  
定普希指國所以加於吾家  
密記奔走之悔外乞師求救

君亦才造應為吾壽畫因切深良  
生惟救吾身實以救中國也漂  
母一飯銘恩圖報  
君之大忠賡絕前古及國以將來  
所以為取于其別也以此贈之以寄  
相思以告天以後世之義士云尔

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Although both of Mamma's parents were first generation Eurasians, they identified themselves with the Chinese and their children regarded themselves as such. Ever since we were little children, we heard Mamma praise what she considered the good points of Chinese culture and drew our attention to those Chinese customs and traditions she thought should be changed. She read Chinese newspapers daily, and when she was terribly busy asked her companion, another Miss Leung, to read them to her while she did something else. Thus she kept herself informed about national, international, and local events. Father preferred to read the English newspapers, and Mamma told us that when they were travelling, one of the first things Father did upon coming to a new town was to go to a hotel or other public place and read the back issues of the papers to inform himself of the news he had missed while travelling.

As has become obvious, Mamma truly admired Father and was proud of what he was doing. She also believed in the Chinese saying: "Our reputation is our second life", meaning that to lose one's good reputation is almost as bad as to lose life itself. She was one of the best advertisers of Father's many philanthropies, and whenever opportunity arose, she would sing his praises whether it was to us, to relatives, or to friends. Father was well provided with the financial means to do good, and all three of our parents were happy that they were able to help those less fortunate. The list of their charitable contributions will probably never be completely assembled, but many were well known in Hong Kong even during their lifetime.

Sometimes Mamma told us of a substantial charitable donation Father had just made; another time we might first hear of one when we read about it in the local papers. When I was his secretary and companion in Europe in 1932 and when I stayed with him from 1946 to 1956 I saw how constantly he was approached by organized charities as well as by individuals wanting help. I saw also the seriousness with which he dealt with these appeals, and how carefully he worded the letters that went with his donations, or those he wrote when he felt obliged to refuse. When Mamma married him, he was young and active, already serving on a number of committees and boards as well as contributing financially as generously as he could. She was exceedingly proud of him even then. No doubt she always encouraged his philanthropies because they fitted in with her generosity and her sympathy for the less fortunate.

Mamma's loyalty to China must have been intensified when in 1898 the reformer, K'ang Yu-Wei<sup>11</sup> and his family stayed in our home as refugees until they found accommodations elsewhere. From what Mamma told us about this visit, which took place before we were born, it was clear that she greatly admired K'ang's dynamic personality and what he had been trying to do to save China. Among K'ang's family staying at Idlewild were his two elder daughters, who became special friends of Mamma's and were among those who tried to cheer her up after Henry died.

11 K'ang Yu-Wei (1858-1927) was a brilliant young Cantonese scholar who felt so humiliated by the defeat of China by Japan in 1895 that he led a group of more than 1,200 "provincial graduates" (who, including himself, were in Peking for the triennial Imperial examinations) in submitting memoranda (of which he was the main author) to the emperor protesting the terms of the peace treaty with Japan and advocating reforms in various Chinese institutions, but preserving the monarchy. To inform and arouse the people he also established study groups and the first Chinese-owned non-governmental newspapers.

The memoranda were rejected by the Imperial officials, but finally, in 1898, they came to the attention of the Emperor, Kuang-Hsü. K'ang's arguments convinced him that China could be strengthened and modernised as Russia had been under Peter I and Japan under the Meiji Emperor.

From June 11 to September 21, 1898, the Emperor, acting on the advice of K'ang Yu-Wei, Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and others, issued forty or more reform edicts dealing with a broad range of subjects: setting up modern schools and revising the examination system; overhauling China's legal system as a necessary preliminary to abolishing extra-territoriality; promoting agriculture, medicine, mining, commerce, inventions and study abroad; and modernising the army, navy, police, and postal systems.

Many details of K'ang's visit are to be found in his "Chronological Autobiography" which is included as the first chapter of Dr. Lo's book, *K'ang Yu-wei, A Biography and A Symposium*. When I arrived in Peking in 1942 as a recently widowed refugee, the author's mother was very hospitable to me in appreciation of Mamma's friendship towards her forty years earlier. She treated me as her "Goddaughter" and through her I met Dr. Lo in California in 1953 when I was there on a UNESCO Fellowship. Told he was preparing to publish a book about his grandfather, I asked my father to have the scroll written for him by K'ang photographed; it is reproduced in this book.

In his *Autobiography*, K'ang mentions that he arrived in Hong Kong by ship on September 29th, 1898 and that Father came on board to welcome him together with Major-General Sir Wilson Black and the head of the Police Department Francis H. May.<sup>12</sup> Black and May represented the Governor of Hong Kong, who had been notified in advance of K'ang's arrival by a telegram from the British Consul General in Shanghai. Father had gone as a private citizen who deeply admired K'ang and wished to persuade him and his family to stay in Idlewild.

K'ang points out that, for his own safety, he first stayed at the police barracks, and a week later, on October 6th, moved to Idlewild. Before coming to Hong Kong he had been in Peking, and the Emperor, knowing his own position was precarious ordered K'ang to leave to save him. By the time K'ang reached Hong Kong the Emperor had already been imprisoned by the Empress Dowager. The various members of K'ang's family had come separately to Hong Kong from wherever they happened to be: in his ancestral village, in Canton or in Macao. Another

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Although the edicts were promulgated, not many provincial officials, except those in Hunan, carried them out. Instead they waited to see how the Empress Dowager, in retirement since 1889, would respond to the radical program. Naturally the conservatives in the court and the bureaucracy opposed them and, led by the Empress Dowager, Tzu-hsi, staged a *coup d'etat*. The Emperor was imprisoned and six of the reformers executed including K'ang's only brother, K'ang Kuang-jen. Many of the officials who had approved of the reforms were dismissed and some banished. All the reform edicts were annulled except the one which abolished the "eight-legged essays." Under order of arrest and with a huge reward offered for his capture, dead or alive, K'ang found refuge abroad. He remained in exile for sixteen years, often dogged by hired assassins.

12 May was later knighted as Sir Henry May and became Governor of Hong Kong. He proposed the toast to the bride and bridegroom at Victoria's wedding.

Mr. Ho paid their hotel bills and daily expenses *en route* to Hong Kong. K'ang, in his *Autobiography*, adds, "Mr. Ho Tung also presented me with several thousand dollars for me to travel (K'ang had been asked by the Emperor to go abroad to secure foreign assistance to save China) and to care for my relatives. The two Messrs. Ho are truly chivalrous men. Where within the seas are there men who can match their nobility of character?"

For many centuries China suffered calamity upon calamity. In recent decades it might have been a famine caused by the flooding of the Yellow River, "China's Sorrow," or by drought; it might have been fighting among the war lords, the war between China and Japan or some other man-made or natural disaster. The newspapers would announce an appeal, sponsored by the Tung Wah Hospitals, by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, or by other organisations. Father could always be depended upon to contribute. Besides giving money to these disaster funds, he also tried to do what he could to promote China's industrial development, both by buying Chinese Government "Reorganisation Bonds," and by making other investments.

He hoped to help solve China's political problems through what he called the "Round Table Conference." During the first decades of the Chinese Republic various generals, known as "war lords," became provincial or regional dictators, more or less independent of the central government although nominally owing allegiance to it. From time to time, these war lords fought one another, causing considerable suffering among the people.

Father, like most other Chinese, was much worried about this and in 1923 proposed that instead of fighting one another, the war lords should come together at a "Round Table Conference" to discuss their differences face to face and try to agree on solutions to the problems of the country. In a speech to the Chinese Merchants' Club of Hankow, he said, "... In connexion with my proposed Round Table Conference, my object is to endeavour to bring the different leaders together, to have them meet one another face to face, to settle their outstanding differences, and finally, to work, not against each other, but harmoniously together for the good of the whole nation."\*

There are those, perhaps, who might consider the idea politically naive. Nevertheless, the proposed project occupied the centre of Father's

\* *North China Daily News* of Shanghai, December 14, 1923.

and Mamma's attention during the 1920's. Who knows how China's history might have been influenced had he been successful.

Father began by writing to Dr. Sun Yat-sen and a few other leaders, many of whom encouraged him to try to put his ideas into effect. A special memorial page (April 26, 1959) of the *Kung Sheung Daily News* (a Hong Kong newspaper now run by my brother Shai Lai), which commemorated the third anniversary of Father's death, listed some of his achievements. Presumably based on earlier accounts substantiated at the time, one article in the special page stated that favourable encouragement for the "Round Table Conference" had been received from Dr. Sun Yat-sen, President Li Yuan-Hung, Marshal Chang Tso-Lin, the former Prime Minister and General Tuan Chi-Jui, General Lo Yung-Hsiang, General Ch'i Hsieh-Yuan, and the internationally known diplomat Dr. Wellington Koo.



*Dr. Sun Yat-sen's visit to the University of Hong Kong, 20th February, 1923.*

A committee of twelve men was set up in Shanghai to help organise the project. Father wrote to each of the war lords, and most replied that he should try to persuade the others to agree. Consequently

in 1923 Father went to Shanghai, Hankow and North China, to try to persuade Marshal Wu Pei Fu to his way of thinking. Mamma went along with him, to be at his side physically as well as in spirit. Marshal Wu received them politely and treated them as honoured guests, but wouldn't give up any of his power.

Six years later, in 1929, Father visited China again, also with Mamma, partly to try once again to organise a "Round Table Conference." In addition he wanted to look at industrial development in various provinces in North China, intending to invest in some of the projects as he was much concerned with how slowly industry was developing and with its importance for the welfare of the country. After several weeks in Shanghai, they went on to Dairen, a port at the southern tip of the Manchurian province of Liaoning. Dairen has been combined with neighbouring Port Arthur, the two now being called Luta. There they stayed for three months. During their stay Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, "The Young Marshal" as he was called, sent an emissary to my parents to invite them to visit him in Mukden, Manchuria (now called Shen Yang). They stayed with him for about a fortnight



*Father on his first Round Table Conference trip with Marshal Yen Shih-shan*

and then called on Marshal Yen Hsi-shan the war lord of Shansi province at its capital T'ai Yuan. Marshal Yen also treated them hospitably, and it was he who provided the mounted guards for their trip to the mountains called Wu T'ai Shan.

Although the Round Table Conference never materialized, the following extract from the *North China Daily News* of December 31, 1923, published on the eve of his departure from Shanghai, gives a *contemporary* appraisal of his efforts.

"... Sir Robert had realized that the best course to inspire confidence in his project would be for him to go in person to interview each leader in turn instead of communicating with them from Shanghai, provided they were ready to discuss the matter with him; and although far from being in the best of health and no longer a young man (Sir Robert is 62 years of age), he unhesitatingly embarked on the arduous enterprise. Sir Robert may well be termed an ambassador of peace. Everywhere he has been received with the courtesy and consideration due both to his name and to the noble mission, though unofficial, on which he is engaged. One result of his recent trip and what has counted for greatest gain, is that he has met the most influential Chinese, apart from the officials, and they have been in every case deeply impressed by his personality and absolute sincerity. . .

"Sir Robert leaves China with ardour undiminished and a fine optimism as to the final success of his Conference scheme. He has opened a path through many obstacles, and will return to supervise the construction of the permanent way to peace. If a full measure of success does not ultimately crown Sir Robert Ho Tung's efforts, if events shape their course by some other channel (and one can never be sure of anything in China), there will always remain the ineffaceable record and personal satisfaction that he did his best in a task, viewed as hopeless and thankless from the very outset by 99 persons out of every hundred, to which he gave of his health and time and money."

By 1936, it was becoming evident that China would be attacked by Japan, so a nation-wide campaign asked people to contribute aeroplanes (really, money to help buy aeroplanes) for China's defence. As Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek's birthday falls in October, it was suggested that the aeroplanes, and the subscriptions to buy them, might be regarded as birthday presents for him. The Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong organised the local campaign, and Father donated \$100,000 Chinese National currency (which was then worth more than the HK dollar) to cover the cost of one combat plane. The

*South China Morning Post* described Father's gift as the largest contribution from an individual. The gift was announced on October 10th, 1936 and on November 2nd of the same year, the Generalissimo sent Father a telegram of thanks. A special envoy also brought him an appreciative letter.

Early in 1937 (I had just returned from London after receiving my Doctor of Philosophy degree), I went to Nanking to ask the Minister of Education about the offer of a position he had made earlier. The then Vice-Minister for Political Affairs of the Executive Yuan,<sup>13</sup> Dr. Franklin Ho, had me call on him. During the interview, he asked me to convey to Father an invitation from the Chinese Government for him to visit Nanking during the Spring of that year, when an Exhibition of Industrial Products would be held. Dr. Ho told me that as Father was a "Senior Honorary Advisor" to the Government and since they knew how patriotic he was, they felt he would be interested in seeing this Exhibition. They later confirmed the invitation in writing and Father, in due course, set out once again for Shanghai. After reaching there, he asked Mamma to join him, which she did.

The officials of the National Government in Nanking made a great fuss over both my parents. They were entertained at receptions, luncheons, teas, and dinners. Generalissimo Chiang was still recuperating from injuries received at the "Sian Incident,"<sup>14</sup> but he received us graciously.

During and after his visit to Nanking, Father made several donations to charities directly connected with events in China. For instance, Madame Chiang had organised an orphanage to look after the children of soldiers who had fallen in battle. Father donated a substantial sum to this orphanage. He also gave HK\$10,000 for famine relief in the provinces of Szechuan, Yunnan and Kansu.

As soon as the Sino-Japanese War broke out, Madame Chiang organised the senior women among the Chinese government officials and the wives of men of similar standing into a national committee with a very long title, "National Women's Association for the Relief of the Officers and Soldiers in the War for Self Defence." Then she organised

<sup>13</sup> The Chinese equivalent of a Cabinet.

<sup>14</sup> The Sian Incident started on December 12th, 1936, when Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek was captured by two of his generals and detained until he promised to co-operate with the Communists in fighting the Japanese. Chou En-lai was prominent in obtaining his release.

another association to look after children who had been orphaned as a result of the war, or whose parents were both engaged in war work and so could not look after their own offspring. I joined both groups while working in Nanking.

The two newly established organisations had branches in many parts of China, and Chinese ladies in Hong Kong, even though it was a British Colony, immediately set up a branch of the relief organisation (followed a year later, by a branch of the organisation devoted to war orphans). Mamma and Victoria asked me to deputize for them and attend the inaugural meeting of what was called The Hong Kong Chinese Women's Relief Association. Mamma was elected Vice-President, and Madame Sun Fo, the daughter-in-law of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the President. Madame T.V. Soong was the Chairman. I have already written of one of the Association's activities, the purchase of surgical equipment for China. Mamma suggested that the Buddhist Seminary suspend classes for the time being, so that the staff and students could devote full time to making padded jackets and trousers for the soldiers at the front. She felt that this was in line with the spirit of compassion, which she had always advocated as an expression of the Buddhist faith.

Meanwhile, Madame Wu Teh-ch'ing, the wife of the former Mayor of Greater Shanghai who was then Governor of Kwangtung Province came to Hong Kong and organised still another relief organisation, named the New Life Association. Mamma was made the Vice Chairman of this organisation and Madame Wu the Chairman. Almost every day, the two of them called on wealthy and patriotic members of the Chinese community and appealed for generous donations.

The General Secretary of the Association, Miss Hung Mou-chiu, in a eulogy written to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of Mamma's Birthday, described how Mamma, when she was not out with Madame Wu soliciting funds, would help the other ladies make bandages and surgical dressings. Because of the status of Madame Wu and Mamma, and their personal visits, many gave more generously than they might have otherwise.

Towards the end of 1937, as the war intensified, the Chinese Women's Relief Association in Shanghai wrote to its sister body in Hong Kong that there were in Shanghai fifty wounded soldiers, whose native province was Kwangtung, and suggested that they be sent back to their home districts through Hong Kong under the auspices of the Hong Kong Association. We negotiated with the local authorities, and the Tung Wah Hospital housed and cared for them while they were in transit.

On New Year's Eve, 1937, the Committee of the Hong Kong Chinese Women's Relief Association, led by Mamma, visited the soldiers and brought them some little gifts. One of the soldiers, who had lost an arm, told her that his aged mother had not wanted him to serve as a soldier, but he had gone anyway. He was, therefore, at a loss to know how he should face his mother when he got home, now that he was crippled. Mamma comforted him as best she could. The next day, the first of January, 1938, one of the committee members, Mrs. Wan Chik-Hing, held a tea party for the Committee. Mamma collected a small donation from each of the group to be distributed to the wounded soldiers so that they would not have to return home penniless. Four days later, Mamma died.

As early as 1870 a group of Chinese philanthropists established the Tung Wah Hospital to look after indigent Chinese and by the 1880's it was first and foremost among the Chinese charities. It provided for its patients low priced or free medical treatment, free medicines, free burial sites in Hong Kong, and a repository for coffins awaiting shipment to the native villages. Since its patients were almost all Chinese, the hospital staff included Chinese herbalist doctors as well as ones trained in western medicine, and its dispensaries were able to fill both types of prescriptions.

There also existed in Hong Kong then the Government Civil Hospital and various private and missionary medical institutions, such as the Alice Ho Miu Ling Hospital and the Nethersole Hospital (which two later merged). Nonetheless, it was the Tung Wah (now called the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals) which met the needs of the indigent who were critically ill, those whose families could no longer cope with extensive nursing care, and those whose families were not in Hong Kong and who could not continue to live in their lodgings or places of work because they were seriously ill.

Soon after Father entered on his working career he became involved in the work of the Tung Wah Hospital and in 1898 became the Chairman of its Board. He and his colleagues decided that as the population of Hong Kong had grown considerably, they should erect an additional hospital building, to be known as the New Tung Wah Hospital. But more immediate problems to be faced arose from a severe plague epidemic in Hong Kong in 1894 and a milder one in 1899. The hospital Board quickly obtained, renovated and equipped a building as an Anti-Plague Clinic in Kennedy Town, a poor section in the western part of the Island. It also printed and distributed a pamphlet urging people to

report to the hospital any cases of plague in their families and either get free treatment in the clinic or free transportation back to their native villages.

As Chairman, Father was responsible for the fund-raising for both projects. His successful handling of them was attributed to his energy and persuasiveness. In the book *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong Kong, Shanghai and Other Ports* (1908), there is a good photograph of the Governor, Sir Henry Blake, opening the New Tung Wah Hospital. Father, in his long Chinese gown and short jacket with the "longevity" design on it, is in the centre as the Chairman of the Board.

Father remained on the "Permanent Board" of the Tung Wah Hospital for many decades, serving as a consultant for and benefactor of its many expanding activities. These included the building of branch hospitals in Kowloon and in the eastern part of Hong Kong island, and the establishment of a number of primary schools and, later, of a secondary school as well.

Besides the Tung Wah, Father also donated to other hospitals, such as the Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital, the premises of which were next door to Idlewild; the Pok Oi Hospital in the New Territories and the Keng Wu Hospital in Macao. As I said earlier, when Father celebrated his Golden Wedding Anniversary with Mother he gave each of his wives HK\$100,000 to be used for her favourite charities. Mamma, of course, used hers to build the Tung Lin Kok Yuen Buddhist Temple. Mother built a medical clinic in the village of Kam Tsin near our farm. She provided the land and the money to build the clinic, and the Hong Kong Government actually did the building. There was money left over which was put into an endowment fund to help cover the clinic's operating expenses. In English, it is known as the "Lady Ho Tung Welfare Clinic" and in Chinese, the "Golden Wedding Hospital." Various speciality clinics are held in the building on different days of the week. It is used by the people of the entire district, which is more than twenty miles from the urban centre of Kowloon and its medical facilities. It was one of the first of the rural clinics that have now been established in the New Territories.

Another charitable enterprise that Father—and Mamma herself, with her savings—was involved in was education. The Tung Wah Hospital schools were among the first free schools in Hong Kong. They served children who could not get into the government primary schools, which were then few and far between, and could not afford the private schools the fees of which were relatively high. In those days boys and girls were

segregated, even in most primary schools. The free schools admitted only boys, until Mamma established the first free school for girls, the Po Kok Free School, in 1930. There was always a shortage of school places until about 1950, so there was keen competition to enter the Po Kok School which even provided free of charge, the necessary books and school supplies.

Mamma herself participated in the selection of new students, and it is said that she always gave preference to the poor. Her staff, however, tried to select those who seemed most intelligent. Between them, out of the hundreds who applied to enter the first grade or to fill vacancies in the other grades, they arrived at compromises acceptable to both.

In the early days of the Colony, the Government, seeing the need for clerks and interpreters in the various government departments and in commercial firms, established the Central School, later renamed Queen's College. Father donated generously to this school, his *alma mater*, and to the Queen's College Old Boys' Association, of which he was the President for many years.

Chinese girls could go to the sister school of the Central School, the Belilios Public School, established, obviously, by the generosity of a gentleman bearing that name. However, there was no separate school for the children of civilian British families. A committee of enquiry into education in 1902 recommended that separate schools be provided for European children. Father had just donated money to the Hong Kong Government for it to establish a school in Kowloon for the teaching of English, open to all. The Government persuaded Father to let the building be used instead as a school for British children to the exclusion of other races. He reluctantly agreed, but regretted the change of policy "so much opposed to the spirit which prompted my offer of the school to the colony."<sup>15</sup> The school was first named the Kowloon British School and was renamed Central British and, later, King George V School. It is still in existence but now admits children of all races and nationalities, and has moved to another site.

The Diocesan Girls and Boys Schools were among the first private schools to be established. The girls' school was originally in Rose Villas in Bonham Road, and the boys' school on the opposite side of the street. Both have long since been moved to Kowloon to larger and better sites. Father, of course, contributed to them too. I well remember

<sup>15</sup> G. B. Endacott, *A History of Hong Kong*, p.281.

that when we were pupils at the "D.G.S." around 1916 the school conducted a fund-raising campaign for an additional building, and Father donated a large classroom. To commemorate this gift, his mother's photograph was placed in the classroom he financed. In 1950 the then-Headmistress added a eulogistic passage at the bottom of the portrait, including a poem written in the Chinese classical style which sang the praises of Father's mother and of her three sons Ho Tung, Ho Fook, and Ho Kom-Tong.

For many years Father served on the Board of St. Stephen's Girls' College, which has already been mentioned as a school which our sister, Mary, attended. His photograph hangs in one of the Halls of that school. Nor were his benefactions limited to schools attended by members of his family. St. Paul's Girls' College, which later became St. Paul's Coeducational College, received sizeable contributions from him, as did many other non-profit schools.

In 1932, while I was lecturing at Lingnan University, Canton, Dr. You-kuang Chu, Dr. Baldwin Lee and I felt there was a strong need for an experimental junior high school which would combine some of the best educational thought, as we knew it then, with many practical activities, although it was not to be a vocational or technical school. Dr. Chu was especially enthusiastic and drafted the detailed plans, but we had no funds with which to establish the school.

Almost by accident, I told Mamma about it and she immediately volunteered to back our efforts financially, supplying the necessary funds for the project even after I had left Lingnan. This was typical of the way she responded to a sensible solution to a proven need. The school was called the "Practical Middle School," and went on for several years. On several occasions she invited the pupils of the "Practical Middle School" to visit her in Hong Kong. The trip must have been an eye-opener for many of the pupils, as they mostly came from poor families and a trip to Hong Kong was a real treat as well as an educational experience for them.

To complete the list of Father's larger donations to schools, although these came after Mamma had died, it seems appropriate to add the two schools that bear his name, each quite different from the other. About 1947, Father offered to donate to the Hong Kong Government a girls' school, without specifying its type or even whether it was to be primary or secondary school (though he did say he had in mind something like the Belilios Public School, a government secondary school for girls). There was considerable difficulty in finding a suitable

site, and the offer was left in abeyance for many years until the Honourable Dr. D.J.S. Crozier reopened the subject soon after he became the Head of the Education Department in the 1950's.

It was agreed that the most pressing need was for technical and vocational education for girls. So the school Father donated was the Ho Tung Technical School for Girls. It developed rapidly, thanks not only to ample operating funds (available only to a government school) but also to its energetic and dedicated staff and its capable Principal. She, of course, had to fight for every additional building, every piece of equipment and for staff other than that normally provided for a girls' secondary school. For instance, one of the teachers was very capable in woodwork, but she had physically to demonstrate this ability before the Principal of the Hong Kong Technical College—who was the supervisor for all technical and vocational education—was willing to give the school an electric saw!

The other school that bears my father's name, at least partially, is the Kam Tsin Village Ho Tung School. This was originally a little rural school which held classes in the old ancestral clan hall of Kam Tsin village in Sheung Shui. Mother used to rent the attic of this old building as her farm headquarters before our farm buildings were completed.

During the early 1950's this little school found its space too limited, and hoped to expand. The school authorities, who were the village elders, approached a friend of Father's who had a villa on the other side of the road from our farm, Major S.M. Churn, a Eurasian whose Chinese name was Mr. Cheung Kung-yung. Major Churn examined the old building, and concluded it was really not suitable for a school. Acting on his advice, the villagers asked Father to supply funds to enable them to build a new school on a piece of the village land adjoining the road. Father agreed and the new school was built.

If a poor family was anxious to get its children admitted to an inexpensive school, it would often ask for help from an influential person, even though the person may have been a stranger. For instance, if someone begged Mamma to get her son admitted to one of the Tung Wah Hospital Free Schools or another charity school, she would oblige by giving the woman one of her calling cards to identify the child, and then telephone the Headmaster or another senior official and ask that the child be given some consideration, if at all possible. This may be difficult to understand for those accustomed to free, universal, even compulsory education.

In 1911 the University of Hong Kong was opened. However, it

incorporated in itself an older institution, the Hong Kong College of Medicine, which had been established in 1887. Father was one of the University's earliest and greatest benefactors. By the early 1920's he had already contributed over a quarter of a million Hong Kong dollars which was then a very substantial sum indeed. His contributions provided the Ho Tung Engineering Workshop; he also gave funds for the Medical and Arts Faculties, for general expenses; and other unspecified purposes. After World War II, as we have seen, he gave a million Hong Kong dollars for the erection of a women's hostel, Lady Ho Tung Hall. While Eddie, Eva and I were students at the University in the early 1920's, we were both proud and slightly embarrassed when one of the first honorary Doctor of Law Degrees was conferred on him. I was impressed with the bright red robe that he wore on that occasion and at university functions thereafter.



*The Ho Tung Engineering Workshop, University of Hong Kong*



*The Lady Ho Tung Hall, University of Hong Kong*

Besides our parents' interest in and contributions to schools for normal children, their charitable donations extended to various orphanages, institutions for the blind and the deaf, and to the oldest of the Chinese social welfare institutions, the Po Leung Kuk.

This was established by the Chinese community to look after the moral welfare of women and children needing such help. Occasionally there were unmarried mothers whose families could or would not look after them, girls "in moral danger" or victims of sexual assault. There were also children whose mothers had been sent to prison or to a hospital and who had no relatives able or willing to care for them. The children in such cases would be sent to the Kuk temporarily.

The women and children in the Kuk were similar to the wards of the Court of Chancery in England. A senior Hong Kong government

official, known from 1913 until recently as the Secretary for Chinese Affairs and now called the Secretary for Home Affairs, decided its policies though he held only an advisory position in the Po Leung Kuk. The Board of Directors, annually appointed by Government, administered the Kuk, with salaried staff appointed as needed. Father was a member of the Po Leung Kuk Board, then its Chairman, and eventually a member of its Permanent Board which had an advisory relationship to the Po Leung Kuk Board.

Originally, the annually appointed Board consisted of men only, but in 1937 this policy was changed and I was one of the two women appointed in 1938. Later, when I served in the Hong Kong Education Department, I continued to visit the Kuk frequently to advise its staff on educational and mental health problems that they inevitably had to deal with.

In the late 1950's the Deputy Director of Education asked me to take two visitors, Mr. and Mrs. R. Sargent Shriver, to see some of our schools and social welfare institutions, including Queen's College and the Po Leung Kuk. Mr. Shriver was then Chairman of the Board of Education of the city of Chicago and Mrs. Shriver sounded very knowledgeable about social welfare problems. I took them to see a group of mentally retarded young women who had been picked up by the Police and who, because there was then no other institution to which they could be sent, were in the Po Leung Kuk.

When Mrs. Shriver saw these unfortunate women, she said to me, "You know, if these women are provided with the right kind of training, they could become self-supporting or at least partially so." I replied, "I know, but there is no such training available for them in Hong Kong nor any teachers who know how to train them." Mrs. Shriver then said that if I could find a college graduate who was genuinely interested in being trained to deal with this problem, she might be able to secure a half scholarship from the Kennedy Foundation. This person could study Mental Retardation in the University of Illinois, and return to Hong Kong to train others how to help persons with this handicap.

I was delighted with the offer and, with considerable persistence, saw it become a reality. As would happen in many communities, when I reported the conversation to the Deputy Director of Education (the late Mr. L.G. Morgan), he said, "There are still so many normal children not in schools that even if such a person were trained we couldn't spend public money to provide schools for the subnormal ones, who would be of little value to society." I responded that in the long run it would be

an economy since if these unfortunate people were not able to earn their own living they would be a charge on public welfare for the rest of their lives.

There was, in addition to this attitude, the problem that it was only a half scholarship, but the Kennedy Foundation solved this by generously raising it to a full scholarship; and the Asia Foundation helped with a round-trip travel grant. The Foundation even added to this when the candidate finished his training in 1961 in order to enable him to return via Europe to attend the Congress of the World Federation for Mental Health in Paris and also to see how the English handled such persons. The Chinese social worker who was chosen for this training eventually did much to train both Hong Kong teachers and social workers in handling this difficult and specialized problem.

Within the Po Leung Kuk, Father gave thirty thousand Hong Kong dollars in 1931/32 for the Memorial Hall. A porcelain portrait of his mother adorns the central hall of the Kuk. Mother also gave ten thousand HK dollars in her name, and a portrait of her mother graces one of the dormitories. This is a favourite Chinese method of raising funds—giving people an opportunity to honour their parents publicly and express their filial devotion while providing funds for the charity concerned.

Father and Mamma had many connections with the Portuguese Province of Macao. During the Second World War Father lived in Macao because he did not want to live under and have to co-operate with the Japanese. He did not return to Hong Kong until after the war was over. As I said earlier, he contributed to Macao's Keng Wu Hospital and Mamma established the Po Kok Free School there, made contributions to the largest Buddhist temple in Macao (the Kung Tak Lam), and to other charitable organisations, Buddhist and non-Buddhist. Father also contributed to various primary and secondary schools. In his Will, he left his house in Macao to the Government, requesting that it be used as a public library for Chinese books, which it now is. He had added a cash donation of \$25,000 for the purchase of books.

In recognition of his donations to Macao institutions, the Portuguese Government made him a Knight Commander and later a Knight Grand Officer of the Ancient Order of Christ, and also a Grand Officer of the Order of Public Education.

When the First World War started, the papers in England and in Hong Kong published various appeals for funds to help Britain defend herself. Father contributed ten thousand Hong Kong dollars to the

Prince of Wales Fund, and donated two aeroplanes, and six thousand dollars towards the cost of a third as well as several ambulances. He contributed regularly to philanthropies in Britain and elsewhere.

When my brother Robbie wrote his notes for the little booklet published in commemoration of Mamma's (posthumous) ninetieth birthday in 1964, he paid special tribute to the influence that Mamma had had on his personal determination to serve China militarily. He wrote also of how Father advised him to serve that country loyally and how Mamma had done her best to encourage him in his aims and ambitions. Robbie commented that although this choice kept him away from home for more than ten years, Mamma was never unhappy about the fact that her son was absent and undergoing military training. While travelling in China she was able to see the austere and trying life of a soldier. Yet she continued to encourage him to do his best, particularly in view of China's extremely difficult times. He commented that her own work was illustrative of what she sought to teach him, for indeed she practised what she preached.

This little booklet pointed out that when Eva decided to be a physician and went abroad for further training, Mamma was very happy. When the Sino-Japanese War broke out, Eva was teaching in the Medical Faculty of the University of Hong Kong, but she gave up this post and joined the Chinese Red Cross. Mamma encouraged her and Eva performed yeoman service in helping the sick and wounded.

In fact, all Mamma's children tried to emulate her in rendering service whenever there was a suitable opportunity. Victoria and her husband probably did most in various ways, and especially took on the responsibility for continuing Mamma's work in the Buddhist temple and school. Many of the other children did their share in "little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love," which will not be enumerated here.



*Mamma in 1935, taken by M. K. Lo*

## EPILOGUE

During the final week of her life, the Tung Lin Kok Yuen was conducting one of its annual week-long religious services, but that year Mamma had requested it be shortened by a couple of days, partly because she did not want the seminary students to take off too much time from the war work in which they were engaged. On the evening of January 2nd, after having attended the service the whole day, she felt unwell. The next day, Victoria and Jean came home to nurse her. Professor Gerard, who had been looking after her, was busy with other duties so Victoria asked our cousin, Dr. S.C. Ho, who was familiar with Mamma's condition, to come and help out. For the next few days he left her only when he had to attend to other urgent cases. When Professor Gerard came for a consultation he disclosed that about a fortnight earlier Mamma had been to see him. He had found that her bronchial asthma was getting much worse and he had advised her to rest in bed, but she said she was too busy to do so. She became critically ill. Many relatives and friends came to enquire after her health, but we allowed only a few people to see her, hoping that if she rested quietly she might pull through.

One of those allowed in was Uncle Ho Kom Tong. Mamma apologized to him that she had not been able to attend a charity opera performance in which he had played a leading female role. He offered to sing one of the songs to cheer her up, and did so.

On January 5th, the house was full of her closest relatives and friends. Mother and two aunts, Mrs. Ho Fook and Mrs. Ho Kom Tong, were sitting at the foot of Mamma's bed. One of them remarked that

they were grouped as they had been in a photograph taken several decades previously. Thus they tried to cheer her up, by recalling earlier and happier times. Father, of course, came up to stay in the Falls to be near at hand.

The religious services at the Tung Lin Kok Yuen had ended early as she had requested, and Miss Lam Ling Chun had about a dozen of the seminary students go up to the Peak to be at Mamma's bedside. Mamma was fond of the students and by that time we knew that there was no way to save her life. Therefore we were not so strict in limiting the people to be allowed into her room, though we still did not want to overcrowd it. She had always said that if someone was about to die, the family and friends must not weep and wail because the noise would disturb the departing soul but should instead repeat the name of the "Amita Buddha."

Her religious Master from the Ch'i Hsia Monastery happened to be in Hong Kong and came up to lead the prayers by the side of her bed. We tried to respect her wishes, but it was hard for us to control our tears. Having the priest and the students there made it easier somehow. Mamma had been given oxygen all morning to ease her breathing. Finally it was obvious that the oxygen was not doing any good, and she died about 2 p.m. surrounded by nearly all those near and dear to her. She had just had her 62nd Birthday; it was the fourth day of the twelfth moon.

An incident occurred when she died which was surely just an unusual coincidence, but which, at the time, many made much of. Just about the moment of her passing, many of those in the room sensed or saw a flash of light passing through it. Some saw it as a white light, but my sister-in-law saw it as red. I was conscious of something unusual happening, but could not say what. Her room had several windows, each containing a number of small panes of glass; the sun was shining brightly outside and our driveway wound down the hillside in several curves. There were many cars on the driveway that day. One likely explanation is that the sun shone on a piece of glass or a mirror on one of these cars at just the right angle to be reflected into the room. Needless to say, no such explanation satisfied many of those who were either present in the room or heard of the incident later.

Mamma had often said that she wanted neither sudden death nor a long, lingering illness, as either would be a terrible strain on those who loved her. She always wanted to die before my father, because she did not want to be a widow. And, above all, she wanted to die while she

was still useful and so be genuinely missed. She seemed to have had all these wishes fulfilled.

The members of her immediate family were all there, with the exception of Eddie and his three younger children who had recently returned to Shanghai, and Florence, her husband, and their two older children who had all been in Hong Kong until ten days before Mamma's death.

As usual, we had had a Christmas lunch, to which Mamma had invited a few close relatives. However, that year the party had been held on Christmas Eve to accommodate Florence and her family who were sailing for Penang the next day and would be away for nine months, going round the world. Since it would be rather inconvenient for them to travel with three young children, Mamma had advised them to leave their youngest, one-year-old Wendy, in Hong Kong.

We sent Florence and her husband two telegrams, trying to minimize the shock. The first said that Mamma was critically ill; the second said that she had died and asked them what arrangements they wanted made about Wendy who had been left at the Falls. Unfortunately, they received both wires at the same time, but did not immediately say anything to the children. The next morning, Daphne, their two and a half year old second child asked: "Where is 'P'aw P'aw' (which is what the daughter's children called Mamma)? 'P'aw P'aw' came to kiss me." Needless to say, Florence and K.C. were much surprised at this remark, as it indicated Daphne must have dreamt of Mamma that very night. There were many other cases in which people who had been close to her reported "seeing" her during the days and nights immediately after her death.

The funeral was set for Monday, January 10th, five days after Mamma had died, because we wanted to wait for Eddie to return. While waiting for the funeral, the family was by no means idle. Immediately after Mamma died, Victoria and Eva, assisted by others, gave her a sponge bath with water purified by having been boiled with pomelo leaves (a Chinese custom). She was clothed in new white silk under-clothing. Victoria had the privilege of doing her hair; this is a service normally rendered by a daughter-in-law, but for various reasons neither Mrs. Ho Wing nor Hesta was able to perform this customary function. Because she had died before Father did, he pinned a red silk "flower" in her hair. The Chinese have a saying describing this custom meaning "If you die before your husband, you wear a flower."

Many years before her death, as is the custom in Chinese house-

holds, Mamma had had a burial outfit prepared so that there would not be a last moment's rush and its inevitable slipshod tailoring. At first she had prepared for her burial a suit of "Kw'a," the ceremonial costume of black satin jacket and red silk skirt used for weddings. However, later she changed her mind and decided that she wanted to be buried in her Buddhist outfit. This consisted of a long, loose, double-breasted gown of thin black linen which formed a v-shaped neck and broad sleeves. On top of this gown a piece of brown linen was draped over one shoulder and under the other arm and fastened with a buckle, thus signifying that she had already taken her "five vows."<sup>16</sup> This was what she normally wore for Buddhist ceremonies.

There were the traditional restrictions on the total number of garments to be worn. On her feet were placed new stockings and a pair of new cloth shoes. In accordance with traditional Chinese custom, a small pearl and a small piece of gold were put in her mouth, so that in her next re-incarnation people would pay attention to what she had to say.

When the body had been properly prepared and clothed, Mamma was carried downstairs by members of her family to the main reception hall of the Falls. A wooden bed had been set up, made of boards lying on trestles. In order to keep the body cold enough to prevent decomposition, blocks of ice were kept in large tubs under the bed. Her body was covered with a special yellow Buddhist coverlet, with prayers printed all over it, called a "T'o lor sutra quilt," and her face was covered with a new white silk handkerchief.

The reception hall had been rearranged and turned into a proper hall for filial remembrance. Mamma was placed in the centre of the hall, with a tall, narrow blackwood table at her head. Behind the table was the blackwood screen Father's friends had given him on his sixtieth birthday. On the table was a bronze bust of Mamma, pots of maiden-hair ferns, small potted plants and vases of cut flowers.

On either side of Mamma were areas screened off with white calico. The one on her left was for the male mourners, and that on the right for the female. The mourners were thus provided with some much-needed privacy, as all through the day literally hundreds of visitors came to pay their respects and convey their condolences.

16 The five vows are the five precepts of Buddhism: not to kill, not to steal, not to lust, not to tell lies, and not to drink intoxicants.



*Mamma was placed in the centre of the hall.*

At Mamma's feet, there was a square blackwood table, inlaid with pieces of oyster shell, on which were placed the offerings to the deceased. On this table were a pair of brass candlesticks in which long white candles were burning, flowers in silver vases, a brass incense burner holding a bowlful of incense ash into which were stuck small thin slices of sandalwood which burnt gradually, and several plates of fruit. At meal times, vegetarian dishes and rice were "served" her in accordance with Chinese custom. The table at her feet had a beautifully embroidered apron tied round it and in front of it was a square padded stool for kneeling, as many visitors feel impelled to honour her with the full kowtow. The stool had a white cover on top of which was a black cushion, to make it still softer. Two masters-of-ceremony stood in attendance, each clothed in a white gown with a white sash around the waist.

In the extreme left of the photograph, a wreath of white flowers can be seen, with a rosette on top and streamers to show by whom it had been sent. Next to the wreath is a small square blackwood table, on which is a silver bowl on a blackwood pedestal, on each of the sloping sides of which a silver plaque was mounted. This was the bowl that

Mamma had carefully designed as a present for Father to congratulate him on his knighthood in 1915. She had asked Chinese and English scholars to draft two eulogistic messages which were engraved in the silver. In arranging her funeral decorations, we felt it appropriate to have this, her favourite bowl, in a place of honour. Inside the bowl we placed a pot of maiden-hair fern.

Standing next to the silver bowl was a long bamboo pole, wound round with paper, with a sort of "shepherd's hook" at the top. From the hook was suspended an object, made of a framework of bamboo strips, covered with white paper hemispherical in shape at the top and cylindrical at the bottom, with streamers dangling from each of the four corners. This was the "faan" usually carried by the eldest son, who leads the funeral procession immediately in back of the clergy. Because Eddie had become a Catholic and Ho Wing was regarded more as Mother's son, this honour fell to Shai Lai (Robbie).

The Chinese regulate the degree of mourning very carefully in accordance with the relationship between mourner and deceased. Mother was an expert in these matters and was in charge of Mamma's funeral



*Male mourners at the funeral.*

arrangements. The sons, daughters-in-law and unmarried daughters went into the deepest mourning, wearing coarse hemp on top of unbleached calico. For the married daughters, the deep mourning was slightly lightened by using a less coarse quality of hemp; grandchildren, nephews, nieces and their spouses were given the appropriate mourning garment, made to their measurements. They wore them when they came to the house and, of course, at the funeral.

Male mourners wore a long, broad band around the head, tied at the back and hanging down behind. The older persons such as Father, Uncle Ho Kom Tong, and my maternal uncle and more distant relatives had a small piece of red cloth sewn to the centre of the headband to bring good luck to the wearer. The women also had a covering for the head—a piece of plain white cotton cloth about 18 inches wide and almost two yards long, folded once as if to make a bag, but only sewn on one side, about half way down. This half open bag was placed over the head so that the face was completely covered from outside view, but the female mourner could look down at her feet. A piece of hemp was attached to this head covering for those in deepest mourning. Everybody wore a sash and most mourners wore Chinese shoes covered with



*Female mourners at the funeral*

plain white cotton cloth.

In traditional Chinese funerals, the family employs a small string orchestra of four musicians, not really to make music but to announce, musically, the arrival of visitors coming to pay their respects. Usually, the visitors stop at the entrance and sign their name in a book so that the family will have a record of who called. At the same time, one of the Masters-of-Ceremony announces in a loud voice "some visitors have arrived" so that the mourners will be prepared.

The visitors go straight to the centre of the room and either bow three times or do the full kowtow; they then bow to the mourners, first to the males all of whom are on their right and then to the females who are on their left, to convey their condolences. If there are many visitors, they line up to do this, six or eight at once, so as to save time. After completing the ceremony, the lady visitors might go behind the calico screen and speak to one or another of the female mourners. Each visitor is given a sweet and a small "lucky money" packet to bring back good luck; instead of the usual red, white paper is used.

We wired Eddie when Mamma died and he immediately returned. The funeral waited for him, of course, in accordance with Chinese custom. Chinese tradition even regards it as unfilial for a person not to be present when a parent dies—hence the advice: "When your parents are alive, do not travel far; but if you do travel, let it be known where you go." Such an unfilial son, or unmarried daughter, one who has not been present at the death, must rush home for the funeral and when he arrives a senior relative has the duty of disciplining him. So Uncle Ho Kom Tong, our fifth paternal uncle, held a rod and gave Eddie a symbolic whipping. Eddie had to enter the house on his knees, from the very entrance to where Mamma's coffin was lying in state.

Shortly before the day scheduled for the funeral itself, coincidence found Uncle Walter, Father's sixth brother, and his wife, in Hong Kong on a visit, and thus able to attend the funeral.

The *South China Morning Post* of January 11th, 1937 described the funeral at length and said in part:

Eloquent tribute was paid at the funeral yesterday of Lady Clara Ho Tung who now lies at the family vault at Mount Davis. Thousands of people attended the procession, over a mile long, and wound through the heart of the city to the Wing Pit Ting Chapel, Pokfulam, where the last obeisances were made before the bier. . .

It is customary for a Chinese funeral to plan its route so that the

procession goes past institutions or organisations with which the deceased was connected. Mamma's funeral was planned accordingly. The coffin, made of heavy thick wood, was carried out of the Falls by sixteen bearers. Over the entrance to the Falls, on the side facing the sea at the south, had been placed a "yu yee" design, in white, symbolising "good luck" for the descendants, but made in white because the descendants were in mourning. At either side of the entrance were hung two large, white lanterns, with the words "Ho Family" in blue, showing passers-by the name of the bereaved family.



*Mamma's coffin was carried out of the Falls by sixteen bearers.*

The funeral procession itself had four more of these lanterns. Each was carried by a man in white holding a long pole to the end of which the lantern had been attached.

The coffin was placed in a motor hearse, which had been carefully decorated with fresh white flowers. In front of the hearse was a truck, similarly decorated, on which a large photograph of the deceased had been mounted—so that everybody could see whose funeral it was. At the head of the procession was a long, red silk banner, carried horizontally in a bamboo framework decorated with flowers, on which was



*The funeral procession.*

inscribed Mamma's name and the most important of her official positions—Vice President of the Hong Kong National Chinese Women's Relief Association and Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong New Life Association. The framework was a light weight structure and was carried by eight bearers. It was escorted on either side by two of Mamma's sons-in-law—"M.K." and "Billy." This banner was called a "chiu" and it was a very great honour to have it at one's funeral. Behind the "chiu" came the lanterns, then the truck with the photograph, with the hearse following immediately behind it. The mourners followed after that, in hundreds of cars. There were five trucks filled with wreaths.

The procession left the Falls shortly after 8 a.m. and wound its course along Stubbs Road down a long gentle slope, for several miles, to the corner of Village Road and Shan Kwong Road in Happy Valley, where the staff and students of the Tung Lin Kok Yuen, the Po Kok Buddhist Seminary and the Po Kok Free School were on hand ready to pay homage on the road. On a table near a street intersection below the Yuen were candles and incense, fruit, flowers and vegetarian dishes, as a special form of respect. After a brief ceremony, the staff and students

joined the procession. The nuns were in their religious gowns—similar to that in which Mamma was being buried, but without the covering drape and with a long white sash hanging over their left forearms instead, as a sign of mourning. The lay girls were dressed in white, with a white sash tied around their waists. They had made their own wreath, with white cottonwool forming the Chinese character for “Buddha” in the same way as in the design of their school badge. Each pair of girls was holding a small tray with a little “skirt” hanging in front, on which had been placed an incense burner. Other girls carried white banners, with appropriate inscriptions or small homemade wreaths.



*The staff, students and nuns of the Tung Lin Kok Yuen, the Po Kok Buddhist Seminary and the Po Kok Free School.*

The procession went past Percival Street where the Po Kok School was first located, and then wound through several streets in the heart of town and proceeded to the cemetery in Pokfulam. The *S.C.M. Post's* story described the scene at the chapel thus:

This building had been dressed with black and white cloth in a dignified style, the pillars being covered and long drapes depending from the ceiling, ending in huge black and white rosette knots.

The passage for those who came to bow before the coffin was defined by black and white covered rails and a red carpet extended from the door to the altar. On this altar were candles, long burning joss sticks and the traditional offerings of fruit and flowers. . .

A large life-like portrait of Lady Clara was hung on the wall above the coffin, which was placed behind the altar. . . Members of the bereaved family knelt on each side of the coffin, and, as the large gathering paid their respects by bowing once, Buddhist nuns chanted their religious prayers.

Thus ended Mamma's earthly existence, which had lasted for three score years and two. But her influence has continued and is still strongly felt by many. The saying that "a man's deeds live after him," is especially true in her case since she is still the main inspiration for the work of the Tung Lin Kok Yuen, the Po Kok Vocational Middle School for Girls and its subsidiary schools. In this religious and educational work her memory is most fittingly perpetuated.



*Family group taken in the garden of Idlewild, October 1937.*

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: The Lunar Calendar and The Traditional Chinese Method of Reckoning Ages.

When the Chinese Republic was established in 1912, it adopted the solar calendar and officially recognized January 1st as New Year's Day. However, the Chinese people have used the lunar calendar for thousands of years and custom proved stronger than official decree. Most of the population continues to celebrate the Lunar New Year's Day, even if they also celebrate the solar New Year.

From time to time, the Chinese Government tried to stop this. For instance, in the early 1930's schools, universities, and business firms were forbidden to declare the Lunar New Year's day a holiday. Nonetheless, many families invited their friends to help them celebrate the occasion. A compromise was reached by calling the Lunar New Year the "Spring Festival", and even in the People's Republic of China celebrations on that day are allowed, though naturally the old customs have been modified.

The lunar calendar is based on the movement of the moon around the Earth, which takes 29.530 . . . days. Consequently every lunar month has to be either a "big" month, with 30 days, or a "small" month, with only 29 days. The first of every lunar month always coincides with the new moon, and the fifteenth with the full moon, though occasionally the moon does not reach complete fullness until the sixteenth. By looking at the moon, one can tell the approximate day of the lunar month.

As twelve lunar months only come to either 354 or 355 days, "intercalary months" are added from time to time, to make up the difference between the solar and lunar years, as "leap years" are introduced into the solar calendar. These "intercalary months" come either once in three years, twice in five years, or seven times in nineteen years. In the nineteenth century there were 37 of them, in the twentieth there will be 36.

A whole month is thus added instead of a single day as in a Leap Year; and instead of always occurring at the same place in the calendar, it can appear at different times of the year, in effect repeating a given month. The months most frequently repeated are, in order, the fifth, fourth, sixth and third months; then the seventh, second and eighth. This is based on the records of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There has not been an "intercalary month" that repeated the first, eleventh or twelfth months, and the ninth and tenth months have each only been repeated once in those two centuries. People born before the establishment of the Republic, and those in more conservative families, still celebrate their birthdays and many other family memorial days in accordance with the lunar calendar. When a person's birthday falls on a month that has an intercalary month following it, he has two birthdays that year; whereas if he was actually born in an intercalary month, he celebrates his birthday on the ordinary month of the same number in the following years until an intercalary month again falls on the month of his birth when he has a genuine birthday. Unlike in western countries, everybody becomes a year older on the Lunar New Year's Day.

Many of the traditional festival days are based on lunar dates, e.g. the Dragon Boat Festival on the fifth day of the fifth month, the Moon Festival on the fifteenth of the eighth month and the Chung Yeung Festival on the ninth day of the ninth month.

Confucius was born on the 27th day of the eighth lunar month and conservative Confucianists still celebrate his birth on that day. However, in the early days of the Chinese Republic researchers computed the solar date for the year of his birth and said it fell on September 28th. This date was then officially adopted as the day on which the birthday of the Sage should be commemorated. It was also set aside as Teachers Day in China.

Formerly, many household servants in China (or Hong Kong) were paid their monthly wages by the lunar calendar, so they were paid thirteen times in years that had an "intercalary month." In fact, most

customs involving dates were based on this calendar. For instance, Chinese shops that gave credit expected their accounts to be paid at the time of the Dragon Boat and Moon Festivals and just prior to the Lunar New Year (when, traditionally, all debts should most definitely be paid).

The details of the calendar are calculated by astronomers and from these the *Chinese Almanac* is prepared. Those who print calendars get their information from the *Almanac*. Most Chinese calendars show both solar and lunar dates. Because the lunar calendar is still closely connected with Chinese life and customs, it may be helpful to understand some of these relationships.

With the original purpose of helping farmers know when to sow their crops and attend to other agricultural duties, there were introduced into the lunar calendar twenty-four "seasonal dates" (see Appendix B) which are based on the movements of the earth around the sun instead of that of the moon around the earth. These include the spring and autumn equinoxes in March and September when day and night are equally divided and the summer and winter solstices falling in June and December. The exact dates are close to those in the solar calendar, varying at most by one day.

Approximately halfway between these four seasonal dates are four others which signify that on those days each of the four seasons has begun or been established. These four days fall on February 4 or 5, May 6 or 7, August 8 or 9 and November 7 or 8.

The twenty-four "seasonal dates" are separated from each other by fifteen days (or sometimes sixteen during the summer months), thus using up the full 365 days of a solar year, the time it takes the earth to go around the sun. Some of these names given to the remaining sixteen dates refer to weather conditions, such as "slight heat," "great heat," "limit of heat," "white dew," "cold dew," "hoar frost descends," "little snow," "heavy snow," "little cold," or "severe cold." Others refer to, but do not pretend to predict climatic conditions as they affect the farmer or to remind him of necessary agricultural activities or normal conditions: "rain water," "excited insects," "clear and bright," "grain rains," "grain fills," and "grain in ear."

Of these twenty-four dates, one of the more important ones is called "Spring Begins" or "The Establishment of Spring"—"Li Ch'un" in Mandarin and "Lap Ch'un" in Cantonese. It normally falls on the fourth or fifth of February each year. The new moon that occurs nearest this date is invariably selected as the Lunar New Year Day. Consequently "Chinese New Year" always falls between January 21st

and February 20th, but is different every year.

A year of twelve lunar months (approximately 354 days) beginning after the day called "Li Ch'un" and not having an intercalary month would end before the next "Li Ch'un," approximately 365 days later. Such years are regarded as inauspicious or "blind years," not suitable for such occasions as weddings and the "Beginning of Education" Ceremony because they contain no "Li Ch'un." On the other hand, if the year should have two "Li Ch'un" festivals falling within it, because of an intercalary month, the year is said to have "Double Springs" and is popularly regarded as very lucky. In Hong Kong and other socially conservative places many weddings are rushed through before such a year ends. A marriage in a "blind year" might turn out childless, while a child who has his Beginning of Education during a "blind year" might well not succeed in his studies.

Many people find the traditional Chinese method of calculating the age of a person puzzling. But once the method is understood, it is very simple. When a child is born, the Chinese consider him to be in the first calendar year of its life, and so he is said to be one year old. On the next Lunar New Year's Day (which for some children, of course, is the very next day), the child enters the second year of his life, and so is "two." From then on everybody's age is advanced by one on Lunar New Year's Day.

Usually, there is a difference of one year between the traditional Chinese and the Western methods of calculating ages, sometimes two years. To calculate a person's age according to the traditional Chinese system, deduct the year of birth from the current year and add one. For instance, a child born in 1971 would be "three" in 1973, as it is the third calendar year of his life. However, if he were born, say, in January 1971 *before* the Lunar New Year, he would have been born in the previous lunar year, which coincided largely with 1970, and so in 1973 the child is in the fourth lunar year of his life, whereas, Western style, he is only two years old until the next birthday which comes in January 1974. He would at that time still be "four" according to the Chinese method of reckoning because most of January 1974 would still be in the lunar year corresponding to 1973.

To translate from the traditional Chinese method of calculating ages to the western method, it is usually easiest to deduct one year from his Chinese "age" if the person has had his birthday for that year, or two years if he has not yet had it; this is due to the western method of calculation. In the above illustration, a child of "three" by Chinese

reckoning would be "two" in western style, or "one" before his birthday. For children born between the first of January and Lunar New Year's Day, or when the calculation is made during that period in any year, we must bear in mind the fact that this period is regarded as belonging to the previous lunar year, and make adjustments accordingly.

The Chinese have two special numbering systems—one called the ten "heavenly stems", the separate characters of which do not have much meaning by themselves but are used to number things in a series, and the other called the twelve "earthly branches", which are names given to the twelve two-hour time periods into which every day is divided beginning at 11 p.m. These two series are combined into a cycle of 60, by taking one from one series and joining it with one in the other, the first such combination being called "chia tzu" (Mandarin) or "gaap tse" (Cantonese). When all ten "heavenly stems" have been used, the series is begun again and the first "heavenly stem" character is combined with the eleventh in the "earthly branch" series. The cycle is completed after 60 combinations have been made, at which time "chia tzu", the first combination, recurs.

The lunar years are referred to by their names in this series. In imperial times they were also referred to by the year of an emperor's reign. In old history books dates are given in this way or by number, e.g. the tenth year in the reign of . . . ; more modern ones also give dates according to the B.C. or A.D. system. Months and days are also sometimes numbered in accordance with the cycle of 60, though much less frequently except for such purposes as divination.

Each of the "earthly branches" has a corresponding "animal star" (which gives each year a name in a recurring cycle of twelve years). Just as some people believe in horoscopes, many Chinese consider that the animal stars of the year in which a child is born will have an important relationship with the nature or temperament of the child.

In the course of the centuries, a considerable amount of superstition grew up around the Chinese *Almanac*, with many people depending on it to ensure that they chose a lucky day in a lucky year for their major activities. The luckiest years are those with "Double Springs." The lucky day is to be found by selecting the date in the *Almanac* with the maximum number of Chinese characters printed in red. The *Almanac* also specifies the particular activities for which any given date is most auspicious or those for which it would be unlucky as well as the lucky or unlucky two-hour-time periods in each day. Any literate person can become fairly skillful in selecting auspicious dates for general purposes

by following the above rules, though, of course, there are additional considerations that an expert would use.

**Appendix B: The 24 Chinese “Seasonal Dates” ( 二十四節令 )**

<i>Name in Chinese</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Literal Translation</i>
立 春	February 4/5	Spring begins
雨 水	February 19/20	Rain water
驚 蟄	March 5/6	Excited insects
春 分	March 20/21	Vernal equinox
清 明	April 5/6	Clear and bright (Spring visit to cemeteries)
穀 雨	April 20/21	Grain rains
立 夏	May 6/7	Summer begins
小 滿	May 21/22	Grain fills
芒 種	June 6/7	Grain in ear
夏 至	June 21/22	Summer solstice
小 暑	July 7/8	Slight heat
大 暑	July 23/24	Great heat
立 秋	August 8/9	Autumn begins
處 暑	August 23/24	Limit of heat
白 露	September 8/9	White dew
秋 分	September 23/24	Autumnal equinox
寒 露	October 8/9	Cold dew
霜 降	October 23/24	Hoar frost descends
立 冬	November 7/8	Winter begins
小 雪	November 22/23	Little snow
大 雪	December 7/8	Heavy snow
冬 至	December 22/23	Winter solstice
小 寒	January 5/6	Little cold
大 寒	January 20/21	Severe cold

Appendix C: The 60-Year Cycle

(with intercalary months in Chinese) ( 週甲及閏月表 )

Chart for 1840-2019 (180 years beginning annually on Lunar N.Y. Day)

生 肖	Animal Star	( 以中文數目字登記各年之閏月 )					
子 生 肖 鼠	rat or mouse	1864 甲 1924 子 1984 壬子	1876 丙 1936 一子 1996 一子	1888 戊 1948 子 2008 子	1840 庚 1900 八子 1960 六子	1852 壬 1912 子 1972 子	
丑 生 肖 牛	bull or cow	1865 五乙 1925 四丑 1985 丑	1877 丁 1937 丑 1997 丑	1889 己 1949 七丑 2009 丑	1841 三辛 1901 丑 1961 丑	1853 癸 1913 丑 1973 丑	
寅 生 肖 虎	tiger	1866 丙 1926 寅 1986 寅	1878 戊 1938 七寅 1998 五寅	1890 庚 1950 寅 2010 寅	1842 丁 1902 寅 1962 寅	1854 七甲 1914 丑寅 1974 四寅	
卯 生 肖 兔	rabbit or hare	1867 丁 1927 卯 1987 八卯	1879 三己 1939 卯 1999 卯	1891 辛 1951 卯 2011 卯	1843 七癸 1903 五卯 1963 四卯	1855 乙 1915 卯 1975 卯	
辰 生 肖 龍	dragon	1868 四戊 1928 二辰 1988 辰	1880 庚 1940 辰 2000 辰	1892 六壬 1952 五辰 2012 辰	1844 甲 1904 辰 1964 辰	1856 丙 1916 辰 1976 八辰	
巳 生 肖 蛇	serpent or snake	1869 己 1929 巳 1989 巳	1881 七辛 1941 六巳 2001 巳	1893 癸 1953 巳 2013 巳	1845 乙 1905 巳 1965 巳	1857 五丁 1917 巳 1977 巳	
午 生 肖 馬	horse	1870 十庚 1930 六午 1990 五午	1882 壬 1942 午 2002 午	1894 甲 1954 午 2014 午	1846 五丙 1906 四午 1966 三午	1858 戊 1918 午 1978 午	
未 生 肖 羊	goat or sheep	1871 辛 1931 未 1991 未	1883 癸 1943 未 2003 未	1895 五乙 1955 未 2015 未	1847 丁 1907 未 1967 未	1859 己 1919 七未 1979 六未	
申 生 肖 猴	monkey	1872 壬 1932 申 1992 申	1884 五甲 1944 四申 2004 申	1896 丙 1956 申 2016 申	1848 戊 1908 申 1968 申	1860 三庚 1920 申 1980 申	
酉 生 肖 雞	rooster or chicken	1873 六癸 1933 五酉 1993 酉	1885 乙 1945 酉 2005 酉	1897 丁 1957 八酉 2017 酉	1849 四己 1909 酉 1969 酉	1861 辛 1921 酉 1981 酉	
戌 生 肖 犬 (狗)	dog	1874 甲 1934 戌 1994 戌	1886 丙 1946 戌 2006 戌	1898 三戊 1958 戌 2018 戌	1850 庚 1910 戌 1970 戌	1862 八壬 1922 五戌 1982 四戌	
亥 生 肖 猪 (豕)	pig or boar	1875 乙 1935 亥 1995 八亥	1887 四丁 1947 亥 2007 亥	1899 己 1959 亥 2019 亥	1851 八辛 1911 六亥 1971 五亥	1863 癸 1923 亥 1983 亥	

**Appendix C: The 60-Year Cycle (Notes)**

1840 = 道光二十年 20th year of the reign of the Emperor Tao Kuang (when this chart begins)

1851 = 咸豐元年 1st year of the reign of the Emperor Hsien Fung

1862 = 同治元年 1st year of the reign of the Emperor Tung Chi

1875 = 光緒元年 1st year of the reign of the Emperor Kwang Hsü

1909 = 宣統元年 1st year of the reign of the Emperor Hsuan T'ung

1912 = 民國元年 1st year of the Republic of China

Intercalary months not known for years 2001-2019 (該年內閏月未詳)

### Appendix D: Foot-Binding

Without question, footbinding was an inhuman practice and I do not intend to defend it. However, so many inaccuracies have been written about it that it may be worthwhile to correct some misconceptions and to provide some historical perspective. Like sexually-related practices in other countries, the custom presumably grew up because the men liked it and the women did everything possible to please them. This, however, is just an assumption.

The Chinese encyclopaedias relate footbinding to a story which allegedly took place in the 10th century A.D.; there are, however, references to the practice by dancers of an earlier period. The 10th century story concerns one of the courtesans of the last monarch (A.D. 934-936) of the Later T'ang Dynasty. She was such a good dancer that the Emperor had a six foot tall golden lotus made for her and decorated it with coloured jewels. He then asked the courtesan to bind her feet with strips of silk into the shape of a new moon and with her feet thus bound, to dance among the petals of the golden lotus. Her performance, so the story goes, was as beautiful and graceful as the clouds, with the result that people imitated her and the practice of foot-binding became popular.

In the course of time, upper and middle class Chinese came to regard it as a status symbol to have the feet of their daughters bound, proof that they came from better class families and didn't have to do any manual labour. Presumably they hoped that this would increase the opportunities of their daughters marrying well. During the Manchu Dynasty, Manchu women kept their natural feet, as did servants, boat-women and girls from the labouring classes who could not indulge in such a hobbling refinement. The practice, however, continued till the end of the nineteenth century. Until the 1920s, especially in the more rural areas in North China, one could still see young girls with bound feet.

The actual binding of the feet consisted of wrapping strips of cloth bandage round and round a little girl's feet to bring the toes as close as possible to the heel—thus producing what was thought to be the shape of the new moon. We were told that if the child was fairly young when this process was started, and if it was done gradually, it hardly gave any pain. Our amah, Leung Yee Goo, had had her feet bound as a child, and she told us that it did not hurt. This has been disputed by others. In her adult life she had her feet unbound. They

hardly grew much larger, but they did not seem to give her any pain.

Both my mothers had bound feet as children but I do not know when they were unbound. Some time between 1898 and 1903 they participated in the inaugural meeting of the Hong Kong campaign to advocate the unbinding of feet. The meeting had been convened by Lady Blake, the wife of Sir Henry Blake, then Governor of Hong Kong. Mamma's feet seldom gave her trouble though she would tire easily if she used them much, but that is typical of Chinese ladies, whether their feet had been bound or not, since most of them seldom went out of their homes except for family functions in the homes of relatives and friends.

### Appendix E: Chinese Names

According to Chinese tradition, a person has a surname, which, of course, remains with him his entire life, and a given name, which is not necessarily the one by which he is usually known. For instance, he may also have a "literary" name or a "style" name, by which he is usually referred to in conversation or in writing, since it is impolite to call a person by his given name.

In addition, as a child, his family may give him a pet name (Chinese call this a "milk" name). When he gets married he is given another first name (called a "big" name) which is henceforth used for formal purposes. Further, he may adopt one or more pseudonyms, for various purposes.

A Buddhist would have been given a Buddhist name when he or she became a disciple of a religious master or teacher. Sometimes a writer or painter gives a special name to the room in which he works and he is referred to as the "Master" of that room.

In accordance with ancient custom, posthumous titles, sometimes of nobility, are officially bestowed on persons of distinguished merit as a form of canonisation. Henceforth such a person would be referred to by this posthumous title.

Chinese family clans generally choose a "generational" name, to be used as one of the two characters making up the given name of all the male offspring in a given generation. (However, sometimes a phrase or a couplet is used, with one character, in order, becoming the generational name for each succeeding generation.) In this way, even in large clans, it is easy to recognise to which generation a person belongs. As seniority of generation counts for a lot in Chinese family status, this is important. Nephews call their uncles and grand-uncles by the appropriate title, irrespective of the age of the other person.

Traditionally, the practice was for daughters to be given a separate "classification" and each family within a clan would probably have a different "generational" name for its daughters, whereas all the males in a given clan were expected to use the one originally decided upon, though some families did not follow this practice. In recent decades, the more progressive families have been giving all their children, daughters as well as sons, the same "generational" name.

### Appendix F: Mui Tsai System

The "mui tsai," literally meaning "little sister," were daughters who had been "sold" by families in financial difficulties who urgently needed to raise funds. The parents of the child took the initiative to find a "purchaser," the money involved being regarded as a gift of "lucky money" rather than as the price paid for a sale. The parents also wrote on a piece of red paper an undertaking that henceforth they renounced their parentage of the child.

Without trying to defend the system, it may be helpful to state some of the facts of the case. The "mui tsai" system developed in a country where the economic conditions were so bad, especially during times of famine, that female babies were sometimes discarded at birth; to the Chinese the "mui tsai" system seemed a better alternative.

The family which paid the money used the child as a domestic servant, but could not resell her. They fed, clothed, trained and educated the girl as circumstances permitted, until she became of marriageable age, usually 16-18 years old, when the mistress would find her a suitable husband and marry her off, with an appropriate dowry. Ever afterwards the "mui tsai" regarded the home in which she had grown up as her "maternal home" just as a daughter would do, and would visit it, often with her husband and certainly with her children, at times of celebration, especially for Lunar New Year.

Traditionally a "mui tsai" was not paid wages, but for festivals and the Lunar New Year she received packets of "lucky money" from members of the family and from their relatives and friends. She could save or spend this money as she wished. The Hong Kong Government set up a Commission to study the practice in the early 1920's and abolished it, as has China.

In the romantic Chinese novel, *Dream of the Red Chamber* by Tsao Hsueh-Chin (translated by Chi-eng Wang and published in English by Doubleday) there are good descriptions of the life of the "mui tsai" in a large traditional family, and in this study I have described a few in the households of my two mothers.

### Appendix G: Ancestor Worship

Ancestral “worshipping” or remembrance existed long before Confucius’ time, but according to Confucianists he organised and systematized the existing beliefs and practices, and resurrected some ancient ones, emphasizing their importance in regulating the moral behaviour of the people. Hence Confucius, and his disciples and followers, took the natural love of a person for his parents and developed it into a concept of overriding importance: “filial piety,” and thus gave renewed significance to the ancient Chinese belief in and practice of ancestral “worship.” There is an entire little book—the *Classic of Filial Piety*—written about this idea, describing “filial piety” as the foundation or the root of all virtues, from which education or training develops.

This classic was one of the first books that the student learnt—after he had learnt the primers (the “three little red books” of three, four, and five charactered lines) and before he went on to the *Four Books*.

The saying goes: “You serve the dead as you serve those who are alive, and you serve those who are departed as you serve those who stay with you.” There is also a saying that it is better to give a little chicken or a little pork to the living, than to wait until they are dead and serve them a whole ox as a sacrifice. So the Chinese are encouraged to do everything they can for their parents while they are still alive as well as to venerate them when they are dead.

**Appendix H: Confucianism and Buddhism**

Primarily Confucianism is a moral and ethical system directed towards the proper regulation of the relationships of human beings to each other and to the Universe of which they are a part. Many Chinese, particularly the more pragmatic, find in it all the religious expression they require. Such people feel that they should "do right" simply because they are human beings rather than for any spiritual reasons. They accept the existence of a supreme force, often called "T'ien," which is translated "Heaven." But they do not think of it as a place or even usually as a Being, but simply as a Power akin to the concept of Providence or Divine Power in some western systems of thought. Probably the nearest western equivalent to a dedicated Confucianist would be a dedicated Humanist of the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries or a Stoic in Classical Rome.

Buddhism, on the other hand, is very definitely a spiritual religion. The moral duties of a good Buddhist are similar to those of a good Confucianist (or, for that matter, to those of a good Christian). But the supernatural idea that Buddha Himself and his closest followers the Bodhisattvas (who are not dissimilar to the Saints of Roman Catholic Christianity) are always ready and able to give spiritual aid, strength and consolation to their worshippers is fundamental to the religion.

### Appendix I: Burials and Re-Burials

Normally the Chinese bury their dead very carefully and thoroughly and do not disturb the graves unless absolutely necessary. However, reburials are permitted under certain circumstances, particularly when someone dies away from the native village in which he (or she) is to be buried. In such cases the coffin might be taken to the village soon after the death, or it might remain temporarily at a coffin repository. Either is expensive and cumbersome. Some families, however, bury the deceased wherever the death occurs and a number of years later exhume the grave and put the bones into a burial urn which can easily be taken to the native village.

Another reason for reburial is illustrated by the case of Mamma's father. The first grave-yard in which he was buried (the "Coffee Gardens") was later repossessed by the Hong Kong Government which wanted to use it for a different purpose. A site was therefore found for Grandfather's grave in the Chiu Yuen Cemetery on Mount Davis in the westernmost part of the island. When my grandmother died, Mamma and her brother proceeded to bury her next to her husband. But when the gravediggers opened the ground, they found water there, so his coffin had to be moved again and was buried a third time.

At this third grave site, accommodation was provided for Mamma's parents and paternal grandparents, her sister and her infant brother, who had been provided with a "wife" through a "marriage" arranged between him and a girl who had also died in infancy. This is a custom frequently practised by the Chinese and derives from the idea that even a deceased boy in time becomes an adult and needs a wife. This concept led to a superstitious fear that if the son was not provided with a "wife," he might cause trouble later if, while he was still single, his younger brother married, or indeed at any other time. On the other hand, it was not felt necessary to have a dead girl married in this way, as many girls remain spinsters.

### Appendix J: Mamma's Obituary

January 6th, 1938, *South China Morning Post*, p.10

"Colony Loses Prominent Social Worker"

Lady Clara Ho Tung

"Many in all walks of life were grieved to learn yesterday afternoon of the passing of Lady Clara Ho Tung, one of the most beloved personalities in this part of the world.

"Lady Clara passed away at the Peak residence at 2:30 p.m. after a brief illness, which was largely aggravated by her energetic work in connection with the relief of war sufferers and refugees. On New Year's Eve, following a visit to wounded Chinese soldiers at the Tung Wah Hospital, she developed bronchitis, and in spite of that she went about her work of charity and love during the next two days until she was exhausted and had to be confined to bed. Her condition then was causing grave concern, it being realised from the very first that the fight for life was rendered almost hopeless because of weakness brought about by her exertions after the onset of bronchitis. As a result, constant attendance and devoted efforts on the part of Professor W.I. Gerrard, Dr. H. Balean, Dr. S.C. Ho and Dr. Eva Ho were of no avail and the end, from heart failure, came peacefully with almost every member of the family at her bedside, including Sir Robert and Lady Margaret Ho Tung.

"Sixty-two years of age the late Lady Clara Ho Tung spent a life full of interest and abounding in good works. She has been received and welcomed by many of the leading Chinese officials, among whom may be mentioned President Li Yuan-hung, President Hsu Shih-chang, Marshal Chang Tso-lin and Mr. Liang Shi-yi. At the state burial of Dr. Sun Yat-sen she was guest of Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, and last year, when again in Nanking, she was received by President Lin Sen and many high government officials.

*A Staunch Buddhist*

"Lady Clara was a staunch Buddhist and her interest in this direction led her to travel widely in China; she was always proud of her record of having seen all the five celebrated Buddhist mountains in the country. She took a great interest in social and welfare work and true to the Buddhist ideal of not destroying life, had identified herself actively with the work of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Hong Kong.

"A monument to her charitable activities is the Buddhist School

for poor children, an imposing welfare institution and an artistic landmark situated in Happy Valley. It is both a gathering place for the local Buddhist community and a school where some 200 girls receive free education. She had also, for a long time, maintained a free school in Macao, until recent years when ill health compelled her to limit her social and educational activities to Hong Kong; while from 1932 to 1935 Lady Clara was largely responsible for the maintenance of an experimental junior middle school conducted by the Lingnan University's Education Department.

"These are only a few instances of the many good deeds done by her for the alleviation of the sufferings of the poor and unfortunate, for in every case of distress, be it flood or famine, her unstinted support was immediately forthcoming.

"At the time of her death, Lady Clara was Vice-Chairman of the Hong Kong Bureau of the New Life Movement for Kwang-Tung, and Vice-President of the Hong Kong Branch of the National Women's Relief Association. In the latter capacity, she threw all her energies into the work of relieving war victims and refugees, during the past two or three months and this was responsible in no small measure for the over-taxing of her strength.

"A kind and charitable lady who always gave a thought to her less fortunate fellow-beings, Lady Clara's death is not only an irreparable loss to her family, to whom the deepest sympathy is extended, but also to the Colony and the Far East as a whole.

"Particulars regarding the funeral will be announced in due course."

Appendix K: Mr. K'ang Yu-wei's Scroll

The following is an abridged, free translation of the scroll. K'ang said that China was in such a weak and sad condition mainly because she was ultra-conservative and would not introduce reforms, so that her people suffered much and the country was in real danger. He added that he had repeatedly petitioned the throne suggesting changes. Fortunately the Emperor was intelligent and knew the international situation, so he introduced many reforms which swept away the bad practices of more than two thousand years. (They had done away with the "eight-legged essay," but kept the public examinations for a few more years, requiring the writing of political essays instead.) He deplored the fact that the Empress Dowager (to whom he refers as "the one falsely on the throne, Nale by name"), being selfish and depraved, had usurped power, dared to depose the Emperor, and thus turned heaven and earth upside down. He explains how he, having helped to introduce the reforms, had been given a secret decree by the Emperor (to go abroad to raise funds), but was very much mistrusted by the Dowager, and was liable to arrest in China. Britain had magnanimously helped and protected him, so that he was able to return to Hong Kong.

"Mr. Ho Hiu-sang, having always been patriotic and worried and indignant about the affairs of the country, heard of my troubles and took it upon himself to help me in my plans. He sent Mr. Chen to invite me and then came personally to my boat to welcome me. My whole family and my relatives stayed with him and he helped me with my travelling expenses. Mr. Ho and Mesdames are intelligent and capable above others. Being loyal and hospitable, they planned for me better than I could have done for myself. After we moved here we felt as if we had come home, so that we could forget that we were travellers or refugees. Alas, during times of trouble even near relatives or close friends often stay far away or pretend they do not see us. Mr. Ho, on the contrary, nobly came to my assistance. He helped me as if I were his brother. His broad-mindedness and farsightedness can be compared with the famous deeds of yore."

The scroll continues with praise for Father's good suggestions regarding K'ang's plans. The suggestions were meant not only to save K'ang but also to save China. He then refers to historical personages who tried to render thanks for similar kindnesses. As he did not know when he would be able to return to China, and thus could not think of how and when he might repay Father's generosity, he had decided to

write the scrolls both as a souvenir and to inform future generations of righteous persons. The scrolls are dated in the ninth month of the twenty-fourth year of the reign of the Emperor Kwang Hsü (i.e., October 1898).



*Father with his decorations*

**Appendix L: Father's Honours, Medals and Decorations**

*Hong Kong: Justice of the Peace, 1899*

*University of Hong Kong: Honorary Doctor of Laws, 1919*

*British Commonwealth: Knight Bachelor, 1915*

Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire, 1955

Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Medal, 1897

Silver Jubilee Medal of King George V & Queen Mary, 1935

Coronation Medal of King George VI & Queen Elizabeth, 1937

An unidentified British Medal

*The Chinese National Government:*

Third Class Order of the Excellent Crop, 1914

Second Class Order of the Excellent Crop, 1916

Second Class Order of the Excellent Crop with Brilliance, 1921

First Class Order of the Excellent Crop with Grand Sash, 1922

Second Class Grand Cordon with Brilliant Jade Decoration and Blue Sash, 1939

Gold Meritorious Medal, 1938

*Portugal: Knight Commander of the Ancient Order of Christ, 1925*

Knight Grand Officer of the Ancient Order of Christ, 1930

Grand Officer of the Order of Public Education, 1952

*France: Commander of the Legion of Honour (France), 1932*

*Germany: First Class National Red Cross Order of Germany, 1932*

*Italy: Knight Commander of the Crown of Italy, 1933*

*Belgium: Knight Commander of King Leopold of Belgium, 1934*

*Annam: Knight Commander of the Imperial Dragon of Annam, 1935*

*His Holiness Pope Pius XII: Two medals*

*St. John of Jerusalem: Knight of Grace of St. John of Jerusalem*

Silver Donal of St. John of Jerusalem



## GLOSSARY

*Almanac, Chinese* 通勝 (通書)

Amita Buddha "Nam Mo Or Mei T'o Fut" 阿彌陀佛

ancestral hall 祠堂

Au Sing-cheung or "Sister Choi" 區成璋 or 彩姐

Au-Yang Wai-chang 歐陽惠昌

baai 拜

beginning of education ceremony 開學

Bhai Sa Gya Buddha 樂師佛

big month 月大

Birthday of T'ien Hou, the Goddess of Heaven or of the Sea 娘媽誕

blind years 盲年

Bodhisattva Man-ju-sri 文殊菩薩

Bodhisattva Samantabhadra 普賢菩薩

Bodhisattva Wen Hsu 文殊菩薩

Buddha, Lord Gautama 釋迦牟尼佛

Buddhist name 法號 (佛名)

carambola, star fruit 楊桃

Castle Peak 青山

Chain, Victor 陳偉壽

Chan Ah-bun 陳阿品

Chan Kai-ming 陳啓明

Chang Hsueh-liang, Marshal 張學良

Chang Liang' 張良

Chang Tso-lin, Marshal 張作霖

Cheng Hsiang-hsien 鄭湘先

chess cookies 棋子餅

Cheung Kung-yung (Major S.M. Churn) 張公勇

Cheung Pui-kai 張沛楷

Chi Lin Home for the Aged 志蓮安老院

Ch'i Hsia Temple near Nanking 南京棲霞寺

Ch'i Hsieh-yuan 齊燮元

Chiang Kai-shek, Generalissimo 蔣介石委員長

chin dui 煎堆

Chin Shan Temple 金山寺

- Chinese dumplings or chung 糰  
 Ching Ming 清明  
 ch'ing 稱  
 Chinkiang 鎮江  
 chiu 旒  
 Chiu Hwa Mountain 九華山  
 Chiu Kut-um 趙址階，號吉菴  
 Chiu Yuen Cemetery 昭遠山堂  
 Ch'iu-lai Sheung 肖麗湘  
 Choa Po-min 蔡寶綿  
 Choi Wan 彩環  
 Chow, Sir Shouson 周壽臣爵士  
 Ch'u-fu 曲阜  
 Chu You-kuang (Chu Yu-kuang) 朱有光  
 Ch'u Yuan 屈原  
 "ch'un gaa" 親家  
 Chung Yeung Festival 重陽節  
 "ch'ung" 葱  
 "ch'ung ming" 聰明  
*Classic of Filial Piety* 孝經  
*Classical Essays* 古文  
 Clear & Bright 清明  
 Cold Dew 寒露  
*Confucian Analects* 論語
- Dairen 大連  
 day and night are equally divided 日夜平分  
*Diamond Sutra* 金剛經  
 "dim sum" 點心  
 Double Springs 雙春  
 Dragon Boat Festival 端午節  
*Dream of the Red Chamber* 紅樓夢
- earthly branches 地支  
 editor by special appointment 特約編輯  
 "eight virtues" of the Confucian school of thought  
 孝、悌、忠、信、禮、義、廉、恥  
 Emperor Kwang Hsü 光緒皇  
 "Establishment" of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter  
 立春、立夏、立秋、立冬

Excited Insects 驚蟄

faan 幡

Festival of the Seven Sisters 七夕

“filial piety is the foundation or the root of all virtues, from which education or training develops” 夫孝者德之本也，教之所由生也

First Class Order of the Excellent Crop with Grand Sash 一等大綬嘉禾

first name (or ‘big’ name) 大名

Five Officials 五大夫松

Fook Po 伏波

*Four Books* 四書

Fu P’a Yi Yuan (Faber Hospital) 福柏醫院

Fung Ping Shan Library 馮平山圖書館

“fung shui” 風水

gaap tse (chia tzu) 甲子

“gau ch’ung go”—nine-layered pudding 九層糕

*General Yang Punishes His Son* 楊六郎罪子

“generational” name 排行

given name 名

Goddess of the Western Heaven 西皇母

Golden Mountain Temple 金山寺

Golden Wedding Hospital (Lady Ho Tung Welfare Clinic) 金婚醫院

Goose Neck Canal 鵝頸橋

Grain Fills 小滿

Grain in Ear 芒種

Grain Rains 穀雨

Great Heat 大暑

Hangchow 杭州

*Heavenly Blessings* 天官賜福

heavenly stems 天干

Heavy Snow 大雪

Ho Cheung Ching-yung 何張靜容

Ho Cheung Lin-kok 何張蓮覺

Ho Chuen 何全 (何世全)

Ho Fook 何福

Ho, Franklin 何謙

Ho K’ai-gai 何啓佳

Ho K’ai-moon 何啓滿

Ho Kom-tong (K'ai-tong) 何甘棠

Ho Shai-lai, General, Robbie 何世禮將軍

Ho Tung, Sir Robert, styled Hiu-sang 何東爵士，字曉生

Ho Wing 何榮

Hoar Frost Descends 霜降

"Hok-lo" 鶴佬

Hong (our cousin) 張瑞康

Hong Kong Chinese National Women's Relief Association

香港中國婦女慰勞會

Hotung, Edward Sai-kim 何世儉

Hotung, Joseph 何鴻卿

Hsiu ts'ai 秀才

Hung Mou-chiu 熊茂昭

Imperial academic honour 功名

*Industrial and Commercial Daily News* 工商日報

intercalary month 閏月

"It is better to give a little chicken or a little pork to the living, than to wait until they are dead and serve them a whole ox as a sacrifice."

與其槌牛而祭墓，不如雞豚之食存

"It is virtuous for a woman to be uneducated." 女子無才便是德

K'ai-tung 啓東

Kam Tsin Village Ho Tung School 金錢村何東學校

K'ang Kuang-jen 康廣仁

K'ang Yu-wei 康有爲

Keng Wu Hospital 鏡湖醫院

Kiangsi Province 江西省

Kiangsu Province 江蘇省

"Kitchen God" 灶君

Kiu Kiang 九江

Kong Wai Lin 江惠蓮

Koo, Wellington 顧維鈞

Kotewall, Sir Robert 羅旭蘇爵士

kowtow 叩頭

Kui P'aw 渠婆

Kuling 牯嶺

"k'un choi" 芹菜

"k'un lik" 勤力

Kung Tak Lam 功德林

- K'ung Ch'iu 孔丘  
 K'ung Fu-tzu 孔夫子  
 k'wa 褂  
 Kwangtung Province 廣東省  
 Kwong Shun Fong 鄺慎枋  
  
 Lam Ling-chun 林楞真  
 Lantao Island 大嶼山  
 Land of supreme happiness in the Western Heavens 西方極樂世界  
 Lap Ch'un (Li Ch'un) 立春  
 Largo Sto Agostinho 崗頂 (澳門)  
 Lau Shan 嶗山 (勞山)  
 Laughing Buddha 彌勒佛  
 Lee, Baldwin 李寶榮  
 Leung T'ing-yuk 梁嘉樹, 號廷玉  
 Li Shu-pui 李樹培  
 Li Yuan-hung, President 黎元洪總統  
 Liang Ch'i-ch'ao 梁啟超  
 Liang Shi-yi 梁士詒  
 Liaoning 遼寧  
 Limit of Heat 處暑  
 Lin Tse-hsu, an Imperial Commissioner 欽差大臣林則徐文忠公  
 Ling (our cousin) 張瑞寧  
 Lingnan University 嶺南大學  
 literary name (or style name) 字  
 Little Cold 小寒  
 Little Snow 小雪  
 Liu Pang 劉邦  
 Living Buddha 活佛  
 Lo Cheung-shiu 羅長肇  
 Lo Man-ho 羅文浩  
 Lo, Sir Man-kam 羅文錦爵士  
 Lo Yung-hsiang 盧永祥  
 longevity incense 長壽香  
 Lu and Li Mountains 廬山、黎山  
 Luk Goo 六姑  
 Lunar New Year's Day 農曆元旦  
 Luta 旅大  
  
 Mak Sau-ying (Lady Margaret) 麥秀英

*Many Kingdoms* 列國誌

Master 主人

masters 師傅

maternal home 外家

Meklo River 汨羅江

memorial elegy 祭文

Meng Chiang 孟姜女

Ming Sum School for the Blind 明心書院

Ming Yuen 名園

Monarch of the Late T'ang Dynasty, surnamed Li 南唐李後主

Moon Festival 中秋節

Mu Kwa 穆瓜

Mu Kwai-ying 穆桂英

mui tsai 妹仔

Mukden 奉天

National Women's Association for the Relief of the Officers and Soldiers  
in the War for Self Defence 中國婦女慰勞自衛抗戰將士總會

Nethersole Hospital, Alice Ho Miu-ling 何妙齡那打素醫院

New Life Association 新生活運動促進會（簡稱新運會）

Ningpo 寧波

official responsible for the memorial ceremonies for Confucius  
大成至聖先師奉祀官

“open the year” 開年

“opening” or “beginning” of education 開學

orphanage to look after the children of soldiers who had fallen in battle  
遺族學校

Ou-Yang 歐陽

“our reputation is our second life” 名譽者第二生命也

“outside” grandchildren 外孫

P'aw P'aw 婆婆

Pei-Tai-Ho 北戴河

pet name (or “milk” name) 乳名

p'ing ts'ai (equal wife) 平妻

Po Kok Buddhist Seminary 寶覺佛學社

Po Kok Free School 寶覺義學

Po Kok Vocational Middle School for Girls 寶覺女子職業中學

Pok Oi Hospital 博愛醫院（元朗）

- political essay 策論  
 Poon Siu-p'un 潘小磐  
 Port Arthur 旅順  
 posthumous titles 諡  
 Practical Middle School 實用中學  
 Praya Grande 南環 (澳門)  
*Prime Minister to all Six Kingdoms* 六國封相  
 pseudonyms 號 (別號或別字)  
 Pure Land 淨土  
 Putu Monastery 普陀山  
  
 Rain Water 雨水  
 Reclining Buddha 睡佛  
 red buns 紅飽  
 "Red House" 紅屋  
*Reflections of Sixty Years* 六十年的回憶  
 seasonal dates 節令  
 Second Class Order of the Excellent Crop 二等嘉禾  
 Second Class Order of the Excellent Crop with Brilliance 二等寶光嘉禾  
 Second Young Master 二少  
 Senior Honorary Advisor 高等名譽顧問  
 Severe Cold 大寒  
 "shang fu chiao tzu" 相夫教子  
 Shanhaikwan 山海關  
 Shantung 山東  
 She Ping-kwong 施炳光  
 Shen Yang 瀋陽  
 Sheung Fu Girls' School 湘父女塾  
 Sheung Shui 上水  
 Shih Liang-chai 史量才  
 Shun Tak 順德  
 Sin Tak Fan 冼德芬  
 "sky dog" 天九  
 Slight Heat 小暑  
 small month 月小  
*Song of the Lute or P'i P'a Hsing* 琵琶行  
 Soong, T.V. 宋子文  
 Spring and Autumn Equinoxes 春分、秋分  
 Spring Festival 春節  
 Ssu Tsin 蘇秦

Sui Sum 瑞蟾

Summer and Winter Solstices 夏至、冬至

Sun Fo 孫科

*Sun Pao* 申報

Sun Yat-sen 孫中山(逸仙)

sung kao 鬆糕

surname 姓

sworn brothers 結拜兄弟

Sze-To 司徒

Sze-Ma 司馬

T'ai Shan 泰山

T'ai Yuan Fu, Shansi Province 山西省太原府

Teachers Day 教師節

"There are three ways of being unfilial, the most of which is not to have a successor" 不孝有三，無後爲大

Third Class Order of the Excellent Crop 三等嘉禾

Thomas G.H. (Tam Ga-szi) 譚嘉士

*Three Character Classic* 三字經

*The Three Kingdoms* 三國演義

three little red books 三冊紅皮書

three meats 三牲

Three Precious Buddhas 三寶佛

three "yuan" days—the upper, middle and lower yuan

三元：上元、中元、下元

Tien T'ung Temple 天潼寺

T'ien 天

time period 時辰

Ting Hai 定海

Ting Hu Mountain 鼎湖山

to pay homage on the road 路祭

T'o lor sutra quilt 陀羅尼被

*Travelogue on Famous Mountains* 名山遊記

Tsan Hsin Lane 贊善里(上海)

Tsao Hsueh-chin 曹雪芹

Tsinan Fu 濟南府

Tsing P'ing Theatre 清平戲院

Tsingtau 青島

Tuan Chi-jui 段祺瑞

"t'uan nien" 團年

Tung Lin Kok Yuen Buddhist Temple 東蓮覺苑

Tung Wah Hospital 東華醫院

Tung Ying Hok P'o 東英學圃

"turn-over" shaped packets 油角

"The two words 'p'ing an'—meaning 'safety'—are worth a thousand ounces of gold." 平安二字值千金

Tytam Tuk Reservoir 大潭篤水塘

Tzu Sze 子思 (孔伋)

vermillion Chinese ink 紅硃

Victoria 何錦姿 (羅文錦夫人)

village elder 父老

Village of Kam Tsin 金錢村

Wan Chik-hing 溫植慶

Wang Chi-chen 王際真

Wang Shih-cheh 王世杰

Warring States 戰國

weekly services 旬七

Wei T'o Bodhisattva 韋陀菩薩

Wei-cheng Chen 陳維城

Weihaiwei 威海衛

West Lake 西湖

When Confucius went by the side of the T'ai Shan 孔子過泰山側

"When your parents are alive do not travel far; but if you do travel, let it be known where you go." 父母在，不遠遊，遊必有方

White Dew 白露

Winter Solstice 冬至

woks 鑊

Wong, David E.L. 黃日煊

Wong Shau-lam 黃壽霖

Wong Sik-lam 黃錫霖

wooden tablet 神位

Writer or painter gives a special name to the room in which he works.  
書齋

Wu Pei-fu, Marshal 吳佩孚

Wu T'ai Shan, the mountain with Five Platforms 五台山

Wu Teh-ch'ing 吳鐵城

yam shrimps 芋蝦

Yan Shau Nin 人壽年

Yang Ming Bao 陽明堡

Yangtze 揚子江 (長江)

Yee P'aw 二婆

Yen Hsi-shan, Marshal 閻錫山

Yen Shing Kung 衍聖公

Yeo Kok-cheang, K.C. 楊國璋

Yi Hai 乙亥

"You serve the dead as you serve those who are alive, and you serve those who are departed as you serve those who stay with you."

事死如事生，事亡如事存

Yu Wang Temple 阿育王寺

yu yee 如意

Yue Man-kwong 余文光

"For places and personal names of international importance, the standard Romanised form has been used. Since the narrative takes place mostly in Hong Kong, the Romanisation of the names of local persons, places and expressions is from their Cantonese pronunciation, as this is the dialect spoken in the Colony. Other names have been Romanised from their Mandarin pronunciation."

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